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NEWS & REVIEWS

8 NEWS + REVIEWS

Fly high with Eagles from Hewson, collect Monty Mole tokens, check out the Mystery of Arkhen Manor, drool over the new Amigas.

13 REVIEWS THIS ISSUE:

Arkenoid gets the C+VG Game of the Month Award. C+VG Hits go to Auf Wiedersehen, Monty, Head Over Heels and Ranarama to name but three.



GUILD OF THIEVES/P64



SHADOWS OF MORDOR/P102



RAVENFLAME POSTER/P58



BARBARIANS/P102

INSIDE STORY

The heat is on! This month's C+VG is hot property. It's a wander the pages aren't signed. We've laid down the law and captured an exclusive on **Guild of Thieves**, the latest from *Magnetic Scrolls* and *Rainbird*. Seeing is believing. But you probably won't believe your eyes! Ace programmer **Steve Turner** has also written an exclusive players guide to his froggy smath for Hewson, **RanoRoma**. You'll be caught on the hop without it. The exclusives keep on coming. There's *Palace's* **Stifflips** and *Melbourne House's* **Shadows of Mordor**, the follow-up to *Lord of the Rings*. We've also negotiated money off details from Golden Jayslick winner that'll save you a small fortune. And don't miss our **Grange Hill**, **Robico** and **Mastertronic Milk Race** competitions. And due to public demand we've also just a fraction of the goodies in this issue. Miss it at your peril.

Tim



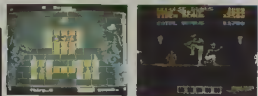
MARTIANOIDS/REVIEWS/P15



AUF WIEDERSEHEN MONTY/P18



GRANGE HILL COMP/58



ARCADE ACTION/P90



MUSIC/PS6



MUSIC/PS6



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ENTERTAINMENT SOFTWARE



■ Melbourne House is hoping to cast a spell over arcade adventures with the **Wiz**, set in the mythical land of Midgard and Niflheim.

The programmer is **Simon Price**, who with **Mike Lewis**, created the comic strip adventures **Redhawk** and **Kwahi**.



Midgard is a world populated almost entirely by magicians, sorcerers and wizards, of varying degrees. You start life as a level one apprentice magician, whose ambition it is to attain the lofty status of fifth level King Wizard.

Armed only with an empty spell book, you must inscribe

within it the incantations you buy from wiser wizards, and travel the land seeking the runic ingredients which are necessary for your rites. Such spells can shield you with invisibility, transmute your opponents, and slay behemoths and necromancers.

Running parallel to Midgard, sideways in time, lies Niflheim, a land of darkness and gloom, its denizens are monstrous, mishapen and grotesque.

As you progress through the five levels of Midgard and Niflheim, gaining in experience, and filling the pages of your grimoire, forethought and strategy is vital. You must continually decide which spells to buy, when to use them, who to trade with and who to kill.

Wiz will be available on Spectrum and Commodore 64 disc and cassette in June. Spectrum £7.95, C64 cassette £9.95 and disc £14.95.

■ **Aul Wiedersehen Monty** is the latest in **Gremlin Graphic's** games following the adventures of Monty Mole. You should see Monty clawing his way up to the top of the charts very soon.

So how would you like to get your hands on the copy of the game for £2 less than you would pay in the shops? Of course you would.

Well, thanks to Gremlin, that's what you can do in this Computer + Video Games coupon collection offer.

Printed below is a special Monty Molehead Token. Next month we will print another one. When you have both heads you can send off to Gremlin for your copy of Aul Wiedersehen Monty for £2 off.

The game will sell in the shops for the following: £7.99 Spectrum and MSX, £9.99 Commodore and Amstrad. But with this exclusive C+VG/ Gremlin offer you can get the games for £5.99 and £7.99.

Send your cheques or postal orders together with the two

heads to Gremlin Graphics, Unit Order, Alpha House, 10 Carver Street, Sheffield S1 4SF. Make sure the cheques are payable to Gremlin and NOT C+VG and specify which computer you own.

Don't forget the second head will be printed in the June issue of C+VG.



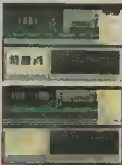
saying something is terribly wrong in the village, he sends a reporter to investigate. **The Mystery of Arkham Manor**.

The mystery deepens when the reporter finds that the Colonial has vanished, leaving his house locked and the curtains drawn.

As you explore the village of Arkham and question its inhabitants, the adventure unfolds with Animated graphics, combined with text, icons and pull-down menus. The program includes some remarkable features to help your investigations and recreate the experience of being a 1920s news-hound.

You must send regular telegrams to your editor, reporting your progress, and write articles to appear in the paper. To enable you to do this there are notebook and photograph facilities, with which you can record salient facts and take pictures of suspects and locations.

The Mystery of Arkham Manor will be available in May 1987 for the Commodore 64 priced at £9.95 and Spectrum and Amstrad at £8.95.



■ **XOR**, the maze game for the BBC launched by **Logotron** in January, has been licensed by **Atari** for the 520ST and 1040ST.

Atari has also taken an option with the intention of launching the **XOR** maze generator software which it will market as an **XOR** construction set.

XOR is a series of mazes through which the player has to find a way, collecting masks by defeating obstacles and rescuing the masks from the maze. It has 15 levels, each with a solution which involves strategic, chess-like thinking to attack a problem.

■ **Hawson** is set to launch what it hopes to be the sequel to **Uridium** at the end of May. It's called **Eagles** and has been written by Danish programmers.



■ Cinemaware does it again, only better! **Sinbad and the Throne of the Falcon** is a truly humorous and entertaining game writes **Marshall M. Rasenthal**. The Colph has been transformed into a falcon and the

Black Prince Camoral is in the midst of a bid to overthrow the Colph and crown Jimote power. Into this chaos, comes Sinbad. There is much to do. You must steer your ship, the Sabaraka, about the oceans and seek out

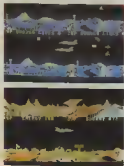
clues and aid in the many regions of the world.

Sinbad requires a quick mind, strategy, and a heck of a good joystick. Arcade oriented sections including battling human and inhuman foes as well as sailing

through treacherous waters. **Sinbad and the Throne of the Falcon** comes from **Cinemaware** for various systems including the XE/ST and the Commodore 64/Amiga.

Poor Maden and Bo Nielsen.

Eagles will be out on the Commodore 64, price £8.95 on cassette and £12.95 on disk.



Games within the next few months — an adventure game. At the moment the Spectrum game is called **Roddish — Secret Agent**, that may change

■ **Don Priestley** is at work on a new **Trap Door** game for **Piranha**, due for release in the autumn to coincide with a new series of the popular animated television series.

But before that **Piranha** will release another Priestley game, **Flunky**, apparently set in Buckingham Palace where strange creatures lurk in its cellars and corridors and rooms.

Playing the part of the Flunky, you must first apply for a job at the Palace. The first of the problems you encounter is how to get into Buck House's employment office.

Once in and dressed in full Flunky attire, the head of the household's staff will set various problems such as lighting fires throughout the Palace. On your travels through the building there will be some pretty famous people to encounter. HRH and her family will also be setting the Flunky some pretty difficult tasks.

Flunky is set for release in September on the Commodore 64, Amstrad and Spectrum at £9.95

■ If you've brought **Martech's Uchi Mata** on the Spectrum check it out closely. It might be slightly dull.

An early preview copy of the game somehow managed to get duplicated in the first production run. You can tell it's a bad copy if at the end of the game the scores do not return to zero but continue to rise.

If this happens on your copy send it to Martech who will send you a new copy and refund the postage.

A Martech man says "Our apologies for any inconvenience caused because of this mistake. We can only hope to relieve the situation by sending out new copies as quickly as possible."

Martech's address is Martech House, Bay Terrace, Paversley Bay, East Sussex BN24 6EE.



■ **Alligato** is set to release three **Double Fun** packages on its **Budgie** label at £4.99. Each pack contains two games.

The titles are **Rocket Roger** and **Blogger**, **Guardian** and **Eagle Empire** and **Hyper Circuit** and **Killer Wolf**.

Also coming up on the Budgie label at £1.99 is **Tobias Football**.

■ Look out for something different from **Addictive**

■ Every game released by **Power House** will contain either a free game or audio track.

All the **Power House** music is provided by the House Electronic Xperience, headed by **Wayne Allen**.

Wayne, formerly of **Kick Partners**, has appeared many times on TV.

■ **Jon Ritman**, programmer of **Head Over Heels**, **Batman** and **Matchday**, is at work on a new soccer game. Details are still secret but it's provisionally called **Soccerama**. After that, Jon will start work on **Matchday II**.

News



■ **Silent Service, MicroPrase's** World War Two submarine simulation, has been released for the Amiga. Price £24.95



■ **Infogrames** departs from its normal style of arcade adventure games with the release in May of **Prohibition**, a gangster shoot 'em up. These shots are from the Amstrad version but the game will also be released on the Atari and Commodore. No details of price are available yet.



■ **Trivial Pursuit Genius Edition** has been released by **Domark** for the IBM PC and compatibles, including the Amstrad 1512 series. It will cost £24.95

■ This picture of **Domark** duo **Mark Strathan** (blonde) and **Damonic Wheatley** (brunette) is not what it seems. They are not disguised to avoid people who bought **Friday the 13th** but to promote the launch of the **Baby Boomer** edition of the best-selling **Trivial Pursuit**.

It's enough to score the **Living Daylights** out of you. Which, by chance, happens to be the title of the next James Bond Film. Domark have scooped the rights to a game based on it.

Domark promise the new game will be a lot better than **A**

View To A Kill, based on the last Bond epic.

Licensed from the producers of the James Bond films, the game of **The Living Daylights** follows the plot of the film as **James Bond**, played by **Timothy Dalton** for the first time, roving the world in an attempt to save the West from a criminal schism aimed at world domination.

This game is being produced by several teams of top programmers — one in the USA! Two highly-rated UK programming teams are already hard at work.

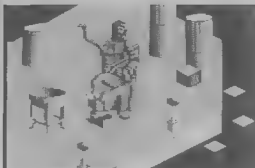
Design Design are working on the Spectrum and Amstrad versions while **De re Software** are coding the Atan 8-bit version. In the USA, **Sculptured Software**, of Salt Lake City, are producing the Commodore 64 and Amiga versions.

The game is due for a summer launch, like the film, and will be released in mid-July. The first release will feature Amiga, Atari, Commodore 64, Spectrum 48K and 128K and Amstrad CPC versions. Other versions will follow for the BBC/Electron, C16, Amstrad PCW, Atan ST and MSX computers.

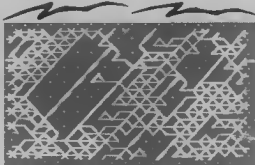


■ **War Game Greats**, the first compilation of 551 strategic simulation games, is to be issued by **US Gold**. Titles included are **Battle for Normandy**, **Knights of the Desert**, **Combat Leader**, and **Tigers in the Snow**. It will be out on the Commodore 64, price £14.99 cassette and £19.99 on disk.

■ **Thotimus** has signed a licensing deal with **Electronic Arts** to distribute **Sanxion** and **Delta** in the United States.



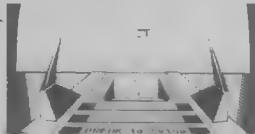
Here's **Levathan** — a C+VG Hit on the Commodore 64 — on the Amstrad. English Software says the game — which includes three landscapes packed with buildings, missile launchers, and flying problems — is due for release in the first week of May. It will cost £8.95 on cassette and £12.95 on disk.



Here is **IQ, GRL's** new release on its Nu Wave label, due out now. It's being billed as the "artificial intelligence arcade game." In it artificial beings fight each other for territory. These beings must be programmed to fight the computer or other players. It will apparently "test the finest minds." If you fancy having your brains tested, then IQ will cost you £8.95 on cassette and £14.95 disk for the Commodore 64. An Atan version will follow.

Now here's something to watch out for. **Zynapse** — the first game from none other than **Dominic Robinson**, the ace-coder who did such a truly awesome job converting **Urlikun** onto the Spectrum. **Dominic** has teamed up with **John Cumming** to create a game that will appeal to all dedicated zappers everywhere. Escape an alien infested space station, battle through asteroid storms, infiltrate enemy planets and attempt to win the final conflict. **Zynapse**, "a horizontal scrolling epic", will be out in June for the Spectrum, C64 and Amstrad. Keep 'em peeled for this one!

This is **Micronaut One** — **The Moebius Trip**, fresh from the baffling brain of ace coder **Pete Cooke**. Can Pete match the epic addictiveness of **Tau Ceti** and **Academy** with this new one? The answer is, of course, a big affirmative! The plot is fairly simple. You play the part of a droid who inhabits a massive computer. This droid job is to transfer power around the vast brain. But, you guessed it, there are nasty lifeforms building webs and draining energy all over the place. The game is set inside the computers communication tunnels and you race through them — seeing the outside world through your viewscreen. **Micronaut** looks as if it's going to be very special. Watch for it on the Spectrum in May on the nexus label.



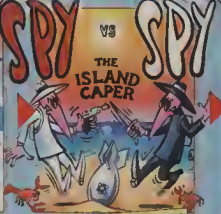
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News



■ Hang on to your joystick's of you all action speed freaks. Check out **Romulus** from Quicksilver on the Commodore 64. It'll bug you. Welcome to the Ingros transporter planet which is developing problems. You, playing the part of Technician Nick Bradley, have the task of de-bugging it. But watch out. These bugs are apparently intelligent.

The plot sounds really complicated — references to "randomising on the chip generation unit", "T-States" and "Transmission Stages." But when you get down to it it's a matter of piling up the points with some nippy joystick action.

■ **Commodore's new Amiga 500** — billed as "the best home computer at any price!" — will sell for £499 plus VAT. But on top of that you'll have to add a minimum of £299 plus VAT for a monitor.

The machine is certainly impressive. C+VG's Hal Gassip ace **Tony Takoushi** declares: "There's nothing to touch this machine."

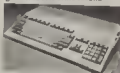
Commodore also the A500 as the "ultimate upgrade" for

people who currently own Commodore 64s, Spectrums and BBCs.

The Amiga A500 offers the Amiga standard Motorola 68000 plus three chip word-processor system with 512K RAM which is internally expandable to one megabyte. As a WIMP system the Amiga A500 comes complete with a mouse.

An in-built 880K 3.5 inch floppy drive is included with the opportunity to add two additional drives. It also has PC compatible parallel and serial ports, and Amiga systembus expansion.

Commodore predicts there will be 300 plus software titles available when the machine goes onto sale in the second



quarter of the year. Amiga titles already available include **Rainbird's Starglider**, and **Mindscape's Defender of the Crown**.

The Amiga 500 will get its first main public showing at the Commodore show on June 12, 13 and 14.

Commodore have also unveiled its new business Amiga, the A2000.

The A2000 is based on the Motorola 68000 running at 7.14 MHz supported by three co-processors, with one mega-byte of RAM which is internally expandable up to a maximum of nine mega-bytes. As standard



there are eight interfaces including serial and parallel ports and an interface for the detachable 94-key business keyboard. A mouse is included in all configurations.

Prices start at £1,095 (ex VAT) for an A2000 with single 3.5 inch 880K floppy drive, one mega-byte of RAM, Keyboard and mouse.

Christians Unghri live at **Decatation** and **Rabar Mission** frame has re-emerged at **Hewsons** with a new Spacey blaster called **Gunnrunner**. Claimed to be "one of the most advanced games for the Spectrum to date." **Gunnrunner** is set on the ice planet Zero. And you'll need all that ice to stay cool as you sail out to save the planet from the attentions of **Destro**. The war world. Your father has left you a detailed map giving a route across the complex plutonium pipe system which will take you to the unlikely essential to combat the enemy. Your strength and agility must be at its optimum to overcome the many obstacles in your path. Seek out the jet packs, shields and deadly poisons hidden along the supply route to assist your journey to freedom. **Gunnrunner** will be available for the Spectrum at £7.95. Release date: May 20.

■ **Remember Sweevo?** That lovable cartoon hero of **Sweevo's World** the 3D arcade adventure released by **Gargoyle Games** last year. Well he's back and playing it for laughs again in **Hydrofool** out soon on the **FTL** label. It's similar in style to **Sweevo's World** but set underwater. And just when you thought it was safe to go down to the beach.

■ **Who are these gameless looking bunch of computer industry figures caught posing in a very undignified manner hoping to attract some attention?** They'll all **Virgins**, actually. Or more accurately they all work for **Virgin Games**.

The only one we can identify is **MD Nick Alexander**. He's the one in the middle with a football stuffed up his pullover. The football is a clue to a game, **FA Cup '87**, a revamped version of last year's **FA Cup Football**.

You'd think they would have better things to do with their time.



■ **Host the main sail Pirates from MicroProse**, is a swash-buckling simulation set on the high seas.

Players are tested on a wide range of sailing skills, from navigation to battle tactics and preventing a mutiny — himing the big episodes can spell victory or defeat.

First there's a crew to press-gang. Later, plunder ports and hunt for treasure buried by wary townfolk.

Finding valuables is not the only reward waiting for the daring sea-captain either. Get to know the Governor and there could be romance in the air with his beautiful daughter!

The Governor may grant you some land and a title, to end your days in comfort as a respected nobleman. Then again, the future could see you branded as a common scoundrel.

Pirates, is scheduled for release in the US late May, followed closely by its UK launch and will be available first on disc for the C64, with versions on Apple, IBM and Spectrum planned for later this year.

■ The memory of **Tau Ceti** lingers on at **CRL** with the release of **Traxxon**, a new space shoot 'em up. Traxxon is a construction site satellite orbiting around Remo — one of the Tau Ceti planets.

After the Tau Ceti wars Traxxon is found to be damaged. You are sent to Traxxon to repair the damage.

Once there, you discover the reactor has started to melt down. You have to act fast and find the exit from the manual system in your maintenance car in order to get off Traxxon before its inevitable meltdown and destruction. The manual tracks will provide the player with various obstacles and robotic worker cars will hamper the player's escape and force him to shoot the cars off the tracks.

The price for **Traxxon** is, as yet, undecided. The Commodore version will be released in May with the Spectrum and Amstrad versions following in June.

Meanwhile, **CRL's Wooley and Moty**, two arcade strategy games for the Amstrad, should be out now.

■ **Star Raiders II** — renewed last month on the Amstrad — will also be released on the Amstrad, Commodore and Spectrum by **Electric Dreams**.

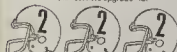
Meanwhile **Bureaucracy** written by **Dauglas Adams**, author of the **Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy**, is due out on the new IBM, Apple II series, Macintosh, Aten ST, IBM 126, Amstrad PCW and Amiga Price £34.99.

May will see the release of **Space Quest** by the fantasy role playing specialist **Sierra On Line**, best known for **King's Quest** and **Black Cauldron**.

Atari's Supersprint will be released in September by electric Dreams. The player gets a choice of eight tracks to test their racing and driving skills.

Data East's Firetrap, in which the player must climb burning skyscrapers, extinguishing fires and rescuing people, will be released by Electric Dreams in October.

UFO Rahu Danger the space **Nichlbus** space war game which centres on a transforming warrior, will be released on IBM, and Spectrum. Prices for games released on the Spectrum, Amstrad and Commodore will be £9.99 and £14.99 on disk.



■ You collected the first coupon. Now cut out number two and be the first in your street with a FREE copy of **Super Sunday**, the truly wonderful American Football simulation from **Nexus**. We've got 200 copies of the game to GIVE AWAY! to the first C+VG readers to send forth tokens and the coupon below to **Nexus, DS House, 30 High Street, Beckenham, Kent.** Get yours in NOW!

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THE REVIEWERS

TIM METCALFE:

The Ed man wields the fastest joystick of all. When his word is heard your better listen.

PAUL BOUGHTON:

Shoots from the lip. Likes zip in his zap.

LEE BRATHWAITE:

Radio Lancashire's ace games man, always ready to air his views.

CHRIS CAIN:

The Amiga man. But Cain is able to be persuaded that 64 isn't near

retirement age.

DAVID BISHOP:
As an Amstrad fan, The Bishop preaches what he practices. He is also full of praise for the Atari ST.

STEVE BADSEY:

The Doctor reports from the frontline about war and strategy games.

NICKY TREVETT:

Reclusive Nicky has the knack with the BBC,

Brian Webber:

Sees all, hears all, plays all.

JERRY MUIR:

Games expert Muir has the Atari 8-Bit between his teeth. Something he **XLs** at.

ARKANOID

- MACHINES: SPECTRUM/C84/
- AMSTRAD/ATARI ST
- SUPPLIER: IMAGINE
- PRICES: £7.95 (SPEC) £8.95 (C84/
- AMS) £14.95 (ATARI ST)
- VERSIONS TESTED
- SPECTRUM/C84
- REVIEWER: TIM

Not since /ker/ Warrior has the C + VG office seen such

bloodshed! Yup, we've been fighting over the joystick again — this time just to get to grips with *Imagine's* insistent smash arcade conversion *Arkanoïd*.

Our arcade ace Clare Edgley raved about the Tarto coin-op when it first appeared — and now we're going to rave about the computer conversions.

OK, so in all reality *Arkenoid* is a revamped version of *Breakout*, that ancient game

which us ancient gamers sometimes brush the cobwebs off to relive great moments of gaming history.

Trouble is Arkanoïd is just awesomely addictive and extremely playable. You're hooked from the moment you load up the game.

So what's it all about? Well, you're in charge of a Vaux craft — sounds like some sort of German rodent — and you're supposed to be trapped in

Aimed only with an energy bolt you have to break down mysterious barriers preventing your escape. These barriers are built of "bricks". Break 'em?—see!

Anyway you have to blast away at these bricks by using the Vaus craft as a bat—fitting the energy bolt back and forth off the walls. Energy capsules drop down from the wall as you destroy it. Collect these, they are useful items. Each has a



ENDURO RACE

- MACHINES SPECTRUM/C64/
- AMSTRAD/ATARI
- SUPPLIER ACTIVISION
- PRICE £9.99/SPECTRUM/C64/
- AMSTRAD/£14.99 (ATARI ST)
- ALL DISCS £14.99
- VERSION TESTED SPECTRUM
- REVIEWER TIM

Did this hit the heart of the
semantic-lexical conversation? It
wasn't quite there. — *ee*
We want to please only
Special

But the Spectator was blunt — "It seems as if we can get to the academy. All the obstacles are there as plain as the cliffs and burnings in track have — rap —"



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arcade fantasy game!**

Warlock



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TROLL



The Doomlord as
WARLOCK



The Doomlord as
GOBLIN



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Published by Domark Limited, 22 Hatfield Road, London SW19 3T 01-897 5134
Trivial Pursuit was programmed by Oxford Digital Electronics.



The world's most hunted mole now becomes the most travelled mole as Monty travels Europe, hunted and hunted by the police — Intermole, actually — in a bid to find freedom, peace and quiet.

Yes, Monty's back in another Gremlin escapade, *Auf Wiedersehen Monty*.

AUF W

Mr Mole was locked up by the law for taking coal to keep warm. He escaped and eventually fled abroad, lying low in Gibraltar. But his safe haven has been blown and he's on the run again. The game's challenge is to take Monty across Europe, raising enough money for him to buy a Greek

island by the name of Montos from which there is no chance of extradition.

Basically the game comes down to a reel trail for platform freaks as Monty explores screen after screen, solving easy puzzles, difficult puzzles and some puzzles which unless I had been told the answer, I don't think I'd have got in a

you have to find that
outh me you can
tals to something which
le... ..

Scattered around the screens are a multitude of objects, some useful, some lethal, others downright dangerous.

When you take the next step, you're introduced to a fanciful world that might as well be the Mona Lisa (it could be), the money will be useful. And in Monaco Monty should really try and repair his car so he can compete in the Grand Prix. If he should win, the prize money

won't go to waste

Scattered around the playing
screens are plane tickets.
Collect the ticket and get to an
airport and Monty can travel to
another country.

One piece of advice it always pays to make Monty jump up and down if he appears to be in an impossible position with nowhere to go. In lots of places

- MACHINE: CBM 64/5 SPECTRUM
- AMSTRAD/MSX
- SUPPLIER: GREMLIN GRAPHICS
- PRICE: £8.99/£14.99 (CBM AND AMSTRAD CASSETTE AND DISK)
- £7.99 (SPECTRUM/MSX)
- REVIEWER: PAUL

- | | |
|---------------|----|
| ▶ GRAPHICS | 8 |
| ▶ SOUND | 7 |
| ▶ VALUE | 8 |
| ▶ PLAYABILITY | 10 |



EXPRESS RAIDER

- ▶ MACHINE C64/SPECTRUM/AMSTRAD
- ▶ SUPPLIER: US GOLD
- ▶ PRICES £9.99 (C64/AMSTRAD) £8.99 (SPEC) ALL DISCS £14.95
- ▶ REVIEWER: TIM

Yup, it's time for some rootin' tootin' cowboy capers arcade style. *Express Rider* is a mix of martial artistry and shooting skills set in the Wild West.

So if you've played the game in the arcades you'll know how sometimes it can be utterly frustrating — but fun at the same time. The computer version is the same. Parts of the action will make you want to throw your joystick at the screen. Parts of it will have you on the edge of your seat.

The message is that it's worth getting by the irritatingly difficult bits just to play the rest of the game.

The idea behind the game is

pretty basic. You have to fight your way onto a train, fight your way along the top of it leaping from carriage to carriage, then it's on to horseback for a rip-roaring ride up the side of another train shooting up the gunmen defending the gold.

All this has to be done within the given time limit — fail and you lose a life. The good news is that you can always restart the game where you left off. None of this back to the beginning nonsense.

You can play the game in any one of three modes. Practise mode gives you an amazing 32 lives — but you only get to play the first two trains. There are eight in all.

In the normal mode you get five lives and get to try all eight

trains. If you lose all your lives you get the option of going back to the beginning or hitting the fire button within ten seconds which places you back at the end of the train where you died with your boots on. A useful feature this. In advanced mode you have to go back to the beginning when you've lost all your five lives.

The action begins at the railhead where your cowboy has to battle a few goons as the train — nice graphics here — pulls out.

if you fail to beat these
railway guards — bli like the
rush hour this part — you miss
the train.

Beat them and you climb
aboard and begin your battle to
reach the engine before time

The one thing that really lets the game down are the sound effects. Silly little tunes and poor spelt effects litter the game. C+VG's Golden Joystick winner Rob Hubbard should have been allowed to go to grips with this game.

Arcade addicts may find this conversion doesn't come up to scratch.

Overall, not a bad game — but the sound and frustrating bits of gameplay let it down.

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| ▶ GRAPHICS | 8 |
| ▶ SOUND | 5 |
| ▶ VALUE | 7 |
| ▶ PLAYABILITY | 7 |



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PULSATOR



martech

PULSATOR

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But he is not alone. A variety of deadly and intelligent enemy pulsations patrol the mazes, each with its own devious way of making life difficult.

Waiting them to pieces will not always be the right thing to do - and anyway, it's easier said than done.

A fast moving and attractive game, requiring quick reactions and quick thinking. Only for those in search of a real challenge!

NEMESIS THE WARLOCK

Can Nemesis the Warlock fight his way through screen after screen of vicious Terminators to find and destroy Torquemada, chief grand Master of Torment?

Wave upon wave of the evil horde fall before his gun or to crushing blows from his mighty sword of Execution, but will they come. As the battle rages, Torquemada exerts his twisted influence on the scattered corpses of his deranged followers and they turn grotesquely into life as deadly knife-wielding zombies.

Write-wielding zombies, the Warlock, from 1000 AD, and enter this nightmare world - you may never return!!

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But... wait a minute. It's worse than that. In the rush to get into the Phantasmagoria of the action - you forgot the 'How to Repair Circuit Boards using the Phantasmagoria'.

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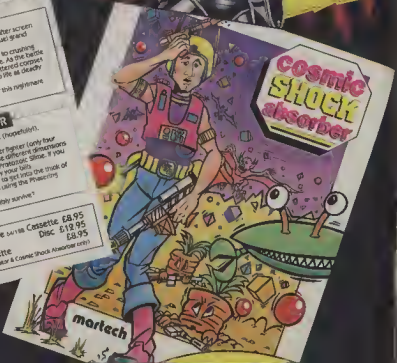
martech.... LIVE THE GAME!

Nemesis THE WARLOCK



martech

cosmic SHOCK absorber



martech

MOTORBIKING

With the release of three bike racing games at once, it looks like being a rich time for motorcycle freaks everywhere. So on with your helmet and hang on tight for the low-down on the latest two-wheeled thrills on offer for the Amstrad.

SUPER CYCLE

Yet another racing game from the Epyx stable that has, in the past, brought you *Pitstop* and the brilliant *Pitstop II*, in terms of graphics and gameplay, *SC* offers very little to set the world on fire, but it is very playable despite the fact that cassette owners must continually rewind the tape to start a new game.

Once the main code has loaded you are asked to select one of three difficulty levels. Choice of level affects the time limit within which a track must be completed, as well as the amount you skid round the corners. The computer riders are also less aggressive on the lowest skill setting.

The bike's dashboard is a simple affair consisting of a speedometer, rev counter, and a column of lights that tell you which gear is currently selected. Control is by joystick or keyboard.

Your 750cc bike will lean into each bend with your knee-guard only microns above the tarmac. You'll start to drift towards the outside of a bend if your speed is too ambitious for any particular bend. This can be particularly tricky when negotiating a bend and trying to overtake a computer rider at the same time.

Each successive track gets more difficult to complete with the addition of extra hazards such as road works, oil and ice patches, and sharper bends. Many tracks are also set against new graphical backdrops ranging from the cities to the country, via the desert and Cape Canaveral. Some tracks must be negotiated at night.

Overall, *Super Cycle* has travelled well from the C64 original. It is well programmed, with smooth track scrolling, good sprite design and animation and, most importantly, it is fun to play if you want a no-nonsense bike racing game with plenty of action that look no further.

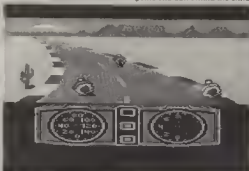
500cc GRAND PRIX

Grand Prix is a split screen, one or two player driving game designed to appeal to arcade players looking for a little extra depth.

As with *Super Cycle*, your

first task is to select a skill level which affects cornering ability and computer rider behaviour. You can also choose between the one and two players variations each of which can be played under practice or full race conditions.

There are twelve international grand prix tracks to choose from, each with its own set of quirks and problems — novices are advised to start with a track



▲ SUPER CYCLE



▲ 500cc GRAND PRIX



▲ TT RACER

like Silverstone.

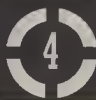
In race mode there are four or five computer racers (depending on whether a one or two player game is selected), making a total field of six riders.

Control is the same as *Super Cycle* but the program's response is far more sluggish with an almost unacceptable gap between moving the joystick, say to the left, and seeing your rider actually lean and turn that way.

Although Microids have performed miracles on the Amstrad, if you want a really playable two player racing game and don't mind the extra

REVIEWERS

C+VG



two wheels, look seriously at *Pitstop II* (Epyx/US). Gold before picking up the keys to this one.

TT RACER

- MACHINE: AMSTRAD CPC 664
- RAM: 612K
- SUPPLIER: DIGITAL
- INTL: RAS 10H
- PRICE: £3.95
- REVIEWER: DAVID

Digital Integration has always had a name for producing professionally designed and programmed games. The Amstrad version of *TT Racer* will do nothing but enhance that reputation.

TT is a genuine motorcycle simulation in the mould of Firebird's excellent *Flaws*. It has gone to painstaking lengths to bring an air of authenticity not only to the program itself, but also to the comprehensive and well produced documentation that accompanies the package. Before each race you have the option of improving your default grid position (10th out of 12 starters) by clocking a fast practice lap. Although it's not obligatory, you are strongly advised to take advantage of the practice sessions as they give you a chance to get used to each track.

If you are lucky enough to have a friend with an Amstrad you can link your two computers together via the RS232 port and then race against each other. The option screen lets you configure one Amstrad as the 'master' and the second as the 'slave'. The game is then loaded into each machine separately and away you go.

The pits areas appear as a solid yellow building at the start. When in a race of more than a few laps you'll need to pay them a visit to refuel and get new tyres. The number of times you do this will depend on the set up values you chose for your tyres before the race.

Although the nitro effect of driving *TT* is very realistic, making your head sway from side to side — you're completely round the bend! A must for all lovers of racing games, simulations, and professionally designed and programmed software.

- GRAPHICS
- SOUND
- VALUE
- PLAYABILITY



"Humans are only scared of invisible ghosts..." This is the opening line to Psi 5's new one, Olli and Lissa.

The game tells the story of a millionaire who is going to ship a castle stone by stone from Scotland to the States. This would be great, but someone is living there.

The dweller in question is Sir Humphrey, a very friendly ghost who plays with Olli and Lissa. He's not keen on traveling, and so Olli and Lissa must help him.

To help him, you must gather ingredients for a potion from around the castle. This potion will make Sir Humphrey invisible, so that he can scare away the big bad American.

Sir H. will tell you what he requires, and a picture of it will flash in the air, showing you what it looks like.

Although this is a nice touch, it's pointless because it will be the only thing around anyway.

Once you know what to get, you can guide Olli around the castle, to search for the object. Once found he must take it back to Lissa, who will mix it in a pot.

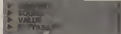
Guiding Olli, you will come across some not-so friendly ghosts. These ghosts must be jumped over or avoided in true 'platform' style.

After returning a place to Lissa, you will be able to search for the next object given, but you won't have to look that hard. You see all the pieces are on a different screen, which is always linked on to the last one.

To make it clearer, there are eight objects, and eight screens. One object on each screen. To collect object three you must go through screens one and two first.

Should you get all eight pieces, Sir H. will become visible and the game will end. The thing that grabs me though, is the compelling gameplay.

Additive, humorous and value for money are just some of the qualities of this game. A real cheap thrill!



Psi5 TRADING



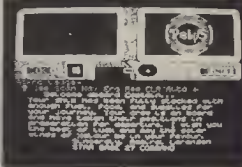
There are two ways to trade in space. Elite placed you alone in the cockpit. Whether you were borrowing or blasting, you took overall control of the situation. Psi 5 tries for an even more ambitious format, much closer to a Star Trek scenario. You become a fully fledged Captain, commanding a full crew.

I doubt that there has ever been a more ambitious game on the humble Spectrum. It ever a concept craved out for disk access, this it. But until the +3 arrives, the first adventure for tape users will be coping with Psi 5's multi-load. This is made all the more tricky by an apparent crash once the crew is loaded. But don't panic, flip the tape, hit LOAD **, and soon you'll be ready for take off.

The secret of success in Psi 5 lies on the ground though. If you don't obtain the right crew, it'll lead to problems when you're light years from home. Your ship has five posts to fill, in different departments, and six individuals to choose from.

In each case it's up to you to decide whether the expert with blasters who knows next to nothing about missiles is a better bet than the multi-weapon expert who lacks field experience.

Even more ambitious is the



SHADOW

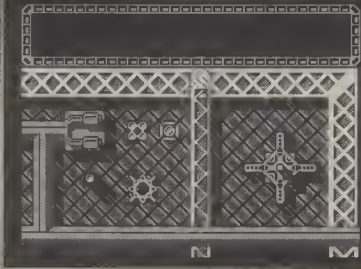
- ▶ MACHINE SPECTRUM
- ▶ SUPPLIER: THE EDGE
- ▶ PRICE: £7.95
- ▶ VERSION TESTED: SPECTRUM
- ▶ REVIEWER: JERRY MUR

In space, nobody can hear you scream.

"Oh no, not that lousy job!" The lousy job in question is a reconnaissance trip round the outside of a Star Class Liner, to make sure that all's ship shape. At least you

only have to do it once every five years, which wouldn't be too bad if it wasn't for the fact that the on-board computer has decided to make this the week for its nervous breakdown.

So there you are, all alone at



way that the potential crew have individualized characters, detailed in their reports. Can you afford to take on the engineering genius who is headstrong and has had arguments with superiors in the past? Will you have time to keep an eye on a navigator who is slow to initiate actions and goes to pieces under stress?

With all these decisions it obviously makes sense to choose the simplest mission to start with. This won't pay too much, but there's less risk of getting lost in space or attacked by pirates if you play things safe. After that it's the treacherous second load and you're underway. Even blast off is a tricky business, but at least the instructions suggest the ideal sequence, and you'd be advised to follow it.

Pu 5 doesn't present you with the elaborate graphics of *Elite*, you can watch through the viewscans as the rendezvoused ship swoops in and lets you know that it's also unkindly. Mostly though it's a mass of menus and messages, which can take a little time to learn, but at least they avoid the confusion of keys that would take an Einstein to understand.

You just need left-right and select to contact a department, and then a system of sub-menus lets you issue commands. Let's suppose that you're heppily underway when that pirate appears. Contact the navigator and bring the ship to a halt. Now request scanning to examine the ship. Sit tight until it tells you what you're up against and the best choice of weapons, then move post haste to the weapons officer. Tell him to fire at will, using the relevant form of attack.



PRESS SPACE OR ENTER TO START.

YOU WILL HAVE BEEN FULLY TRAINED WITH
THOUGH PLEASE READ THE INSTRUCTIONS
AND NOW YOU CAN BEGIN PLAYING AT
THE SPACE OF UCHI MATA. YOU WILL
BE ABLE TO USE THE SPACE OF UCHI MATA
THE ONLY OF UCHI MATA.

Play for a while though, and you'll eventually feel like Captain Kirk, taking messages from the crew and learning whether you made the correct choice. *Pu 5* has a few ragged edges, but it's good to see something of this scope attempted on the Spectrum. It's exciting and different, and you should give it a try.

C+VG REVIEWS 6

UCHI MATA

I first got to grips with the Commodore 64 version of *Uchi Mata* towards the end of last year. I found it frustratingly difficult to get to grips with. Sadly, I've got the same problem with the Amstrad and Spectrum conversions. And they have the added disadvantage of not looking as good.

The graphics on the Spectrum curled like most people who wandered past while the games were being reviewed.

There's a practice mode which is supposed to allow you to get to grips with your opponent—who won't fight back—and practice the various moves.

It's here I found things starting to go wrong. The most I could get my player to do was grab his opponent's jacket. There then followed a brief shuffler as I moved the joystick about to trying to produce a spectacular throw. Somehow I never seemed to make it. The players just stood facing each other. It doesn't make for thrilling moments.

Even in fight mode it seemed to be merely lock—and frenetic joystick wiggling—which allowed me to make some sort of throw. Most of the time I ended up the victim with the only bells achieved being the ones handed out by my opponent.



SKIMMER

the tail of a space juggernaut, and the only anti-air is a laser for'ard, in the control section just to spice things up the defence mechanisms are still active and under the impression that you're a dangerous piece of space debris. So, they hurt everything that they've got at you!

Skimming across the surface of space liners has become an extremely popular pursuit, following the trail blazed by *Uchima*. But don't think for one minute that *Shadow Skimmer* is yet another clone. Overcome the initial similarity and you're playing a whole new ball game. The one I have in mind is pinball.

If you've ever wondered what that silver bearing feels like as it ricochets off the pillars and sides of a pin ball, wonder no more. Your skimmer behaves in just the same fashion whenever it collides with a piece of space architecture. Even worse, it recoils when it's hit. Suddenly you find yourself bouncing wildly from screen to screen.

Complete control is the key to escape. Unlike the *Uchima* craft, which looped and soared, the skimmers really feel like they're gliding just above the surface, with quite steady acceleration but rather less accurate brakes. Such are the hazards of minimal gravity. Their pulse leasers only fire

when you're moving too, which means you have to fly into the face of the enemy to blast them.

Skimmers fly low, but not so low that they can't flip over on their backs. This leaves them less well defended, but it also serves to sneak under some deck structures. It's a crucial manoeuvre and one that you'll need to perfect as soon as possible if you're to progress from level one.

The Star Class liner has three sections, all of which are interlinked, but not necessarily on the surface. Apart from zooming round tight corners and flipping under bulkheads, you have to descend into the cargo holds, through hatches which only open when you stop above them. By this stage you'll probably suspect that the designer of this liner was a frustrated mass freak.

An added complication is that, before you can progress from one section to another, you have to destroy the key defence mechanism for the sector. The control panel, which surrounds the action window, shows you what this looks like, but it's still fairly well hidden and has to be shot. An accidental collision destroys it, but doesn't open the path to freedom!

You only have three shields, which won't last long if you insist on straying into the path

of the defence drods as they stream out of their ports. You even lose strength if you do nothing, which does wonder to help maintain a sense of urgency! Add the maze element to the shooting and dodging, and you may wonder if you stand any chance at all.

Time, then, to slow down and admire the scenery for a moment. Seldom has the Spectrum looked so bright and colourful. There's been a revolution in Sinclair graphics, and at last ways are being found to cheat the notorious attribute clash. This is one of the finest examples yet.

The hull is a mass of girders and pipes, the mouths of boosters and unexplained deck machinery. It even appears to follow a logical layout, so that if you took the screens and layed them side by side, you'd have a jigsaw of a totally believable ship design.

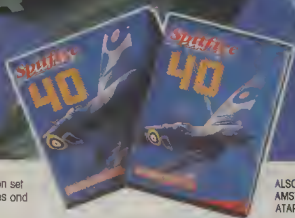
My only fear about *Shadow Skimmer* is that, once you've solved it, it may lose some of its appeal. But possibly not, because when you know your way through the hazards, there's always the temptation to fine tune your performance and go for ever faster escape times.

- GRAPHICS
- SOUND
- VALUE
- PLAYABILITY

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RANARAMA

- MACHINE: CSM 64/AMSTRAD/SPECTRUM
- SUPPLIER: HEWSON
- PRICE: £2.95 (CSM 64/AMSTRAD), £4.95 (SPECTRUM), £14.95 (AMSTRAD disk), £12.95 (CSM 64)
- VERSION TESTED: CSM 64
- REVIEWER: PAUL

Elsewhere in this issue of C+VG you will have probably have seen Steve Turner's exclusive

player's guide to *Ranarama*. That will give you some idea of the complexities of this game.

To some extent *Ranarama* is a return to Turner's *Dragonator* style of a couple of years back but with a higher degree of shoot 'em up to cater for current tastes.

Mervyn, a sorcerer's apprentice, has turned himself into a frog, while trying to evade evil welloks.

Through against adversity Mervyn must take on and destroy 12 wizards who are hidden in each of the game's eight levels. These are between 50 and 100 rooms to each level, packed with a myriad of troops. So you can see there's quite a lot of territory to explore.

There are eight levels of missiles, eight levels of power and eight types of shield for him to acquire and use. The easiest way is to beat wizards to win their runes and then convert them into this form you require.

The missiles, power and shields are all graded and the nasties on the later levels are graded too.

spell times can also be obtained randomly in certain rooms at spell points.

The rooms are viewed from above and remain in darkness until Mervyn actually enters them. In this way you build up a map of the game as you go along.

When you kill a wizard you can then play a little sub-game in which you have to arrange the mixed up letters of *Ranarama* into the correct order. Now this appears a fairly simple task. However I still haven't managed to solve it with any degree of ease. My rare successes must be put down to luck.

As with *Dragonator*, *Ranarama* involves a high degree of strategy. But the problems are not of such a brain-mangling order that the game gets to a halt.

Good fun. A bit that shouldn't be missed.

Hewson continue to put out good quality games with the emphasis on something new and interesting each time.

I look forward to Steve Turner's next offering. I'm sure it will be every bit as good as *Ranarama*.

- GRAPHICS
- SOUND
- VALUE
- PLAYABILITY



TERROR OF THE DEEP



When I first sat down to play this, admittedly in a semi-drunken state, my initial impressions were "My God! Someone's trying to do a rip-off of *The Eidolon*, and killing miserably!"

Anyway, after several pints of caffeine had been intemperately fed into my system, I finally came to my senses, and realised it was nothing like *The Eidolon*, in fact it was more like an underwater light simulation!

The game is set at the close of

the 19th Century after a shower of meteorites were seen falling from the skies over Loch Ness.

Strange creatures are later reported in the Loch. An eccentric engineer living by the shore has developed a diving bell and has selected you to explore the loch and rid the waters of its alien population.

You start your mission by marking on a map of the Loch, where you want to be lowered into the dank waters. When you are underwater, the view is from inside the diving bell.

Control of this is via your hands, which are represented on the screen in graphic form. You control the various items of equipment, including a trigger button, a light, thrust, rudders,

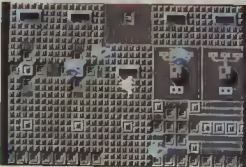
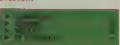
energy wheel, and detonator to mention just a few by moving the joystick left and right, to move the hands onto the various controls, and then move the stick up or down to operate them. You must keep going up for air, as well as supplies and new weapons.

To find out where the alien are, you must follow the various fish to the source of the energy plant some bombs, move away, and detonate them. At the end of the game, a newspaper reports how well you did, and in my case, it usually says, "Stationary Craft Attracts Destruction", even though I was moving at the time!

As I said, this reminded me of *The Eidolon* from Activision at

first, but not not too close inspection, I realised it didn't have the same attraction as the other game. The graphics in this are quite good inside the craft, and on the Loch map, but the sprites are fairly chunky and the movement is quite jerky. The sound is abysmal! If you don't reach for the off switch on the TV after 45 seconds, you must be as musical as Les Dawson!

This is a nice idea that hasn't quite come off, which is a great pity because it could have been excellent.



Loch
Ness

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C+VG**REVIEWS**

HEAD OVER HEELS

► MACHINE: AMSTRAD
► SUPPLIER: OCEAN
► PRICE: £35
► REVIEWER: PAUL

At first sight of *Head Over Heels* I thought I was back playing *Batman*, programmer Jon Ritman's last game. To tell you the truth I could have been playing any of the classic Ultimate games and the horde of clones.

It's very slick, very professional, very pretty and very addictive. And like *Batman* — remember the massive map C+VG printed? — it appears to be a huge game, packed with puzzles, tricks and complexities which should keep you occupied for hours. You'll probably end up bald from tearing your hair out!

In fact, programmer Jon Ritman says *Head Over Heels* is around twice the size of *Batman*. Gulp! How can you possibly get all that into a computer?

On to the plot. The evil empire of Blacktooth has enslaved four worlds, subjecting their people to a rule of tyranny. And the empire's expansionary dreams are not yet fulfilled — and that fills neighbouring planets with a growing sense of unease.

The planet Freedom has decided to send a spy into the Blacktooth empire with the aim to ferment rebellion among the eleven planets. To do this the spy must find the four crowns lost when the empire took over.

Why I say spy I should say spies, a pair of creatures which can operate individually but can also unite to form one entity.

And those symbiotic creatures are Head and Heels.

The game opens where Head and Heels have been captured separately and jailed in the castle headquarters of Blacktooth.

The two creatures are separated by a wall. They both can set out to explore their surroundings. It appears to be a good idea to unite Head and Heels. I couldn't, but that's my problem. Once together and successfully joined their icons will light up.

Besides the world of Blacktooth, there are the following worlds to explore: Egyptus, a planet with the emphasis on corpses, wrappings and stone pyramids. Could this be a clue to the layout of the place?

Penitentiary, the prison planet. Mount enclose and hostile. Beware the pit. "Don't fall in," warns the cassette notes. If only I could find the pit I'd willingly fall in.

Salon, jungle, natives and traps await you.

Book World, a world devoted to the emperor's love of western books.

Scattered around the screens — all the ones I came across — were graphically immaculate — are various objects which must be collected or can be used to help you negotiate the problems.

To be honest when I first started to play *Head Over Heels* I wasn't too keen. Another Ultimate rip-off, I thought. But before long I found myself lured into it and, quite frankly, I was having a good time.

► GRAPHICS
► SOUND
► VALUE
► PLAYABILITY



► MACHINE: SPECTRUM 48/128
► SUPPLIER: FIREBIRD
► PRICE: £1.50
► REVIEWER: LEE

It's about six months ago that Firebird released *Thrust*, which became one of the best-selling budget games in the past year. Now, Firebird has done the inevitable, and released a sequel, *Thrust 2*.

The game plays in virtually the same way, only the storyline has altered by a few great means. For those among you who like a story with your games, here's the one for this game.

The Federal Resistance force has captured a small artificially created planet, which they plan to use as a base for the next offensive against the Empire. Unfortunately, the planet is covered with a red dust, which prevents life existing on the surface, and so you get the job of collecting some orbs from underground and bringing them back to the surface, to help purify the atmosphere.

To make your life even harder then it already is, the orbs are unstable, and will explode after a short period of time, and



THRUST II

android guards inhabit the underground caves.

To complete the game, you need to collect 16 orbs in total, and then progress to another planet.

The graphics, sound, gameplay, and control methods are all virtually the same as the original, although this is slightly harder.

This means that the graphics

are uninspiring, almost no sound, dull gameplay, and totally uncontrollable controls!

Overall, if you liked the original, you may like this, otherwise steer clear even at two quid.

► GRAPHICS
► SOUND
► VALUE
► PLAYABILITY



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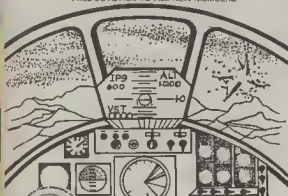
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Abstract

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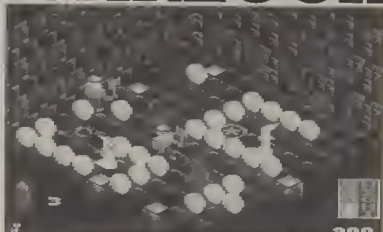


C+G REVIEWS

► MACHINE: AMSTRAD CPC 464
664, 8128
► SUPPLIER: THE EDGE
► PRICE: PRICE: £3.95
► VERSION: STEVE AMSTRAD
2.5K
► REVIEWER: DAVID

Things had been fairly cushy around the Fallen World for a century or two. As Doomlord of all things despicable, you had filled the post with admirable efficiency and ease. That is until the army of light, led by that pussy-foot, The Light Wizard, started butting in where they weren't welcome — namely in your back yard!

WARLOCK



Not only has that horrid band of goody-goodyies penetrated the defences of your castle, 'Doomrock' but they've avian

had the effrontery to convert most of your faithful and evil staff to the light. Ugh! Patently this can't go on, something

must be done before it's too late.

So now the army of light, not to mention half your trusted

► MACHINE: SPECTRUM/MSX
AM 320/MSX
► INTER: MAS TRONIC
► PRICE: £3.95
► REVIEWER: TIM

The spectre of Ultimate rears its head again in this new budget release from Mastertronic. Not quite as stylish as their last blip, *Feed*, but reasonably playable to say the least!

Amaurote uses 3D isometric graphics to depict a vast futuristic city. The object of the game is to destroy twenty five insect colonies. At least 60% of the city must remain intact on the destruction of each colony for the player to continue to the next district.

The player is equipped with an Archon 4 armoured car, a mechanical device with legs instead of wheels and a small supply of "anti-everything" bombs. The bomb can be fired from the car at a variable angle and will continue to bounce until they hit either an insect or a building (the latter are extremely fragile so the bombs must be aimed carefully). The car can only carry a limited number of bombs so the player must return periodically to the city gates for fresh supplies, and, if necessary, repairs to the Archon.

The 25 districts of *Amaurote* are Tanelorn, Gotham, Heliopolis, Palatine, Vilmir, Ur, Capoline, Agrippa, Capaan, Kanihloen, Trael, Dhakos, Equiline, Oflerton, Avantine, Valinor, Garthorn, Pleda, Caellan, Ionia, Quirral, Golum, Klent, Inoray and Viminal.

Each district covers the equivalent of one hundred aersena — although the play area is continuous so there are no such divisions.

The layout of each district is unique (there are no repeated screens) and different building are more prominent in different parts of the city.

On the destruction of an insect colony the player may progress to any adjacent district (making careful route-planning essential).

There are four basic types of insect, each with its own characteristics and purpose in life. They are: The Queen, Drones, Scouts and Rogues.

The Queen is the most important insect in the colony. If the Queen is destroyed then the whole colony is thrown into chaos. The Queen is the only insect in the colony which

cannot be replaced, the Queen cannot be the player's main target.

The Queen has two roles to play in the colony. Firstly, she gives orders to the Drones acting on information provided by the Scouts: these could be to collect food or to attack an intruder (the player).

The Queen's other role is to breed; whenever an insect is killed, the Queen will create a replacement.

The Queen will usually be found near the centre of the colony and, as she is immobile and therefore vulnerable, but she will always be heavily guarded.

The Drones are the most common and least intelligent of the insects. They take their orders directly from the Queen, rarely making decisions for themselves. Their job is to

collect food for the Queen and to defend the colony from outsiders. If you move too close to a Drone it will attack and continue to attack until either it or you is destroyed. Drones are the strongest of the insects; it may take two or three direct shots to kill them.

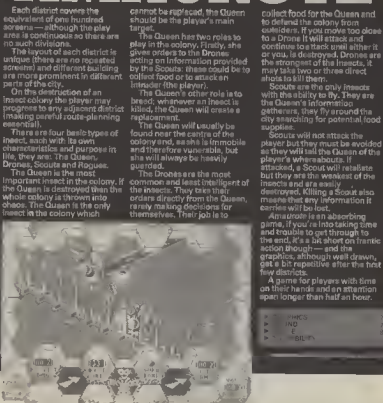
Scouts are the only insects with the ability to fly. They are the Queen's information gatherers; they fly around the city searching for potential food supplies.

Scouts will not attack the player but they must be avoided as they will tell the Queen of the player's whereabouts. If attacked, a Scout will retaliate but they are the weakest of the insects and are easily destroyed. Killing a Scout also means that any information it carries will be lost.

Amaurote is an absorbing game, if you're into taking time and trouble to get through to the end, it's a bit short on frantic action though — and the graphics, although well drawn, get a bit repetitive after the first few districts.

A game for players with time on their hands and an attention span longer than half an hour.

AMAUROTE



► PRICE: £3.95
► SUPPLIER: THE EDGE
► VERSION: STEVE AMSTRAD
2.5K

demon and ghouls (you just can't get the stiff these days!), are out to get you, and beneath the Darkness from the Fallen World forever—perish the thought. And so, single-handed you are about to bodily take on the hoarde of Good.

Luckily, you had an inkling something was afoot so, just in case, you've left a number of changing potions dotted about the castle. These marvelous concoctions allow you to change from one of your three forms to another, depending on the colour of the bottle. Thus you can change from your current state as a werlock, into a troll or a goblin, each of which has differing powers and weaknesses.

The main difference between your three states lies in the amount you can throw your weight about versus your strength in the magic department. As a troll, for instance, you could take on Geoff Capes with your little finger but couldn't pop the proverbial rabbit out of a hat. As a werlock, however, you could probably give Paul Daniels a good run for his money but you're blessed with mercurial muscles!

One problem remains, where do you leave that 'Orb of Power' thingy? If only you could

find it, the White Wizard would be putty in your hands...

Warlock is a pretty, isometric arcade adventure in which you must take The Doomedlord around his castle picking up objects along the way, until you find the Orb. Then it's off to find and defeat The White Wizard, then home for tea.

Unlike *Fairlight*, also from The Edge, almost the entire screen in *Warlock* is taken up by some of the larger locations in the castle, but the refresh time between screens is still a little slow.

The effect is one of being deep down in a dingy dungeon flanked by solid walls made out of immovable granite—very atmospheric. Sometimes, though, it's a little difficult to see, or line up in front of, a few of the exits.

In the bottom corners of the screen are the remaining lives and inventory displays together with 'Magic' and 'Might' meters which help you decide when to take on an enemy and when to back away and look for something tasty to give you more energy.

Castle rooms are often divided by walls, made from lines of stone blocks. In some cases these blocks can be destroyed to make a path through to the other side of the

room. Trap doors allow you to drop down to the floor below, while stepping on a pentagram will send you back up again. Other intense *Magic Places* act as transporters to other parts of the castle but, be warned, these are not always reversible.

Although some objects supplement your might or magic levels, others have the opposite effect and it is important to discover which objects do which to stand any chance of defeating The White Wizard. Some room exits are locked and can only be negotiated with the aid of a key. Unfortunately the door locks again afterwards, so another key is needed to go that way again. Some doors are only locked in one direction and can be freely used when going the other way.

With reasonable sound and music, good graphic design, easy keyboard or joystick control, *Warlock* is yet another in a string of professionally put together titles from The Edge who seem to go from strength to strength.



C+VG REVIEWS 10

- MACHINE: SPECTRUM 48/128
- REVIEWER: U.S. G.O.L.D.
- PRICE: £5.99
- REVIEWER: BRIAN

About eight months ago U.S. Gold sold this weird a game to release *Leadboard* on the Spectrum. An impossible task I thought, but after numerous delays they have finally done it. Not only have they done the impossible but they also get full marks on this fantastic conversion.

Considering the limitations of the Spectrum, U.S. Gold has produced the best sports simulation ever seen on this machine. The gameplay of *Leadboard* has not changed from conversion to conversion and is very easy to get to grips with. I have been hooked on *Leadboard* ever since my first stroke of the ball and now I enjoy playing all four versions of it, soon to be five when the Amstrad version is released.

Leadboard is a golf game which gives a true three dimensional perspective view of the course from behind your man. There are four courses included each consisting of 18 holes, so those of you who bought Konami Golf throw it away and melt it for the number one choice.

The club selection is from a 1W down to a PW. When you have chosen your club the strength of your shot has to be judged by means of a rating gauge. After the strength comes the hook or slice which is the hardest bit to judge as the gauge falls so fast. Once you are on the green you are given a putter and have to judge the slope of the green by means of a stick in the ground and a shadow. The putter can hit the ball up to a maximum of 64 feet but can be more downhill.

When everyone has played out a score card is displayed for each player one after the other to chart your progress, then it is on to the next hole. Full marks have to go to U.S. Gold on this excellent conversion of a CBM64 classic which could have easily turned out to be utter rubbish.

- GRAPHICS: 4
- SOUND: 3
- VALUE: 3
- PLAYABILITY: 3



FIFTH AXIS

teleported through time to recover a piece of the time machine.

If you succeed, you will be show the piece and then you can continue collecting items. Fail and you will have to go through the last stage again.

Each of the time zones has different graphics, but the look remains the same, naturally.

The graphics are quite good. In some places, particularly on the main character animation He jumps and kicks very well in a sort of impossible *Mission* style.



- MACHINE: SPECTRUM 48/128
- SUPPLIER: ACTIVISION
- PRICE: £5.99
- VERSION TESTED: C64
- REVIEWER: CHRIS

The 5th Axis made its debut on the Amstrad about nine months ago, and was quite good.

The game is set in the future, and has the universe all worried about its existence. You see, this professor bloke built a time machine, and used it to collect artefacts from different times.

What's wrong with a bit of the old 'time travelling'? Well, while on one of his many shopping sprees, his machine exploded, and scattered itself about everywhere, and I mean everywhere!

The world is now mixed up, and you must go and straighten things out, collect the parts of the machine, and return the artefacts to their corresponding time zones.

To travel back and forward through time, you must use a new teleporter, which has just been invented. Very convenient.

By running about collecting the souvenirs the Prof brought back, you can transfer them back home. The teleporter won't be active until you have collected all the right objects or when you kill enough of the professor's robots.

These droids, built to aid the Professor, will go mad and attack you on sight. You must use your skills in the martial arts to overcome them.

Once you have completed stage one, you will be

LEADERBOARD LEADERBOARD LEADERBOARD



- MACHINE: ATARI 400/800/XL
- SUPPLIER: ENGLISH SOFTWARE
- PRICE: CASSETTE £5.95, DISC £14.95
- REVIEWER: BRIAN

English Software seem to be bringing out a compilation on every three to four months on the Atari. Atari Smash Hits was released about October and now Smash Hits 7 is on the market. The only problem with these compilations is that one game appears on them about three times. It was Jet Boot Jack on the very first three Smash Hits, now it's the time of *ElektraGlide*, which has appeared on Smash Hits 5, 6 and 7.

The other titles included on this compilation are as follows. *Colossus Chess 3.0*, *Blue Max* and *Alley Cat*. The latter of these I don't have never heard of before and it turns out to be a good game.

ElektraGlide will be the most famous title out of the four. On the CDM64 I found this game a bit of a let down, but the Atari

version is very good. The animation on the title screen is of the highest quality, especially the flag waving in the wind. The idea of the game is to race against time around three different countries, with three different types of steering control. To hinder you on your progress are three dimensional hazards which smash into you. This includes a bouncing ball, a rotating triangle and cylinders which are dropped from a plane.

The music that plays while you are racing is excellent and shows the music capabilities of the Atari at its best. *ElektraGlide* is well worth its place on any compilation, but this is its third time and in my opinion is too much.

Alley Cat is a total surprise to find on a compilation like this. I for one had never heard of it before, but I do enjoy playing it. The idea is you play the part of Freddy the cat and have to steal kisses from your beloved Felicia. To succeed in this certain tasks must be performed to show your courage to Felicia. If you do complete a task you are given the chance to steal a kiss and progress to the next level. The tasks vary from having to chase four mice out of a piece of cheese to eating twelve goldfish while avoiding electric eels in a goldfish bowl. If you stay on the ground too long you will be caught in a fight with Bowser the dog. To hinder you is the mad housekeeper's broom which will sometimes call on Bowser for help.

The graphics and sound are

average for an Atari game but it is four years old. The game has a very high level of additiveness because you just keep playing to see Freddy steal a kiss from Felicia.

Blue Max is another famous game for the Atari and is again four years old. The objective is to make a final assault on three specially marked targets within the city, you have only one plane and very little time to accomplish the mission. On completion you will be rewarded by the title "THE BLUE MAX". This may sound easy but you have everything against you, ie, planes and anti-aircraft guns.

You are able to bomb the targets or go on a bombing run and shoot the enemy planes down during the numerous dogfights. At certain intervals a chance is given to lend so damage can be repaired and the plane rearm and refuel. The

sound and graphics are dated but that is expected for a four year old game.

Now if you want a change from the arcade element then *Colossus Chess 3.0* is for you. Chess is not one of my strongest points as the computer found out, it kept beating me. The instructions are concise and well set out. The board display is clear and easy to follow, even for beginners to chess.

The program has got a very good reputation and is highly recommended if you want a good game of chess. The program allows you to record upto 30 games on one side of a disk, so you do not have to finish the game in one sitting.

Smash Hits 7 comes highly recommended.

- SOUND: 8
- VALUE: 6
- PLAYABILITY: 7



THUNDERSTRUCK 2

- MACHINES: BBC/ELECTRON
- SUPPLIER: AUDIOGENIC SOFTWARE
- PRICE: £7.95 (TAPE) £11.95 (DISK)
- VERSION TESTED: BBC
- REVIEWER: NICKY

As you might imagine from the title, this is the sequel to *Thunderstruck*, wherein our hero Spraco, the Space Rescue Collector, found himself in a medieval castle with puzzles to solve.

Now the intergalactic dustman is back home at the Droidcorp factory complex on Cornebase 5, where there's just one snag — all the humans have been enslaved by the rotten old Mindmaster, who now controls the complex. Spraco has one chance to turn the tables. If he can find the four pieces of the Deatch-Unit which the Mindmaster has carelessly

left scattered around the place, he can assemble it and use it to destroy the villain.

This is a big game. There are 130 locations (although I have to take the author's word for that) featuring a variety of creatures (friendly and otherwise), hazards, objects to pick up and use, and of course puzzles.

Apart from the usual keys for moving Spraco around (left, right, up ladder, down ladder and jump), you can also pick up and drop objects and use the computer consoles scattered around the place. These are rather a novel idea. When you're standing in front of one, you can examine the objects you're carrying, find out your location, give an object to any crowds, machines or aliens that might be nearby, and take it back again.

There's also an energy meter which shows you how fast Spraco is firing and a box which displays the objects he's carrying. It also gives your current score.

The graphics are up to the standard of *Thunderstruck* — colourful, lively and smooth, and the sound is OK. Like *Thunderstruck*, though, I found one or two glitches. I got caught in an apparent dead end, and the only way I could get out of it and play again was to reload the — lengthy — tape.

Annoying. But there's plenty going on and plenty to do, and the game could keep you going for a good long time.

- GRAPHICS: 8
- SOUND: 6
- VALUE: 7
- PLAYABILITY: 8

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GOLD

C+VG

REVIEWS

13

MAGIC MADNESS

- MACHINE: C64/128
- SUPPLIER: ANCO
- PRICE: £7.95
- REVIEWER: TIM

This is the best Anco release so far. It's a fun, very playable and extremely addictive scrolling arcade adventure with enough features to keep you glued to the screen for hours. And at just £7.95 it's a real bargain buy.

The plot goes like this. A long time ago, in a country called Neverland, four magicians tried and each one of them derived his knowledge from a magic scroll.

One day, the bright sky

clouded over and with a deafening roar, Colo the sorcerer appeared. Powerful and wicked, he stole the scrolls and killed the magicians. The nightmare had begun.

The people of Neverland trembled at a good witch and asked her for help to destroy Colo. They presented her with four items: a cape, a cross, a wand and a sand glass.

She has to enter Colo's burrow which is well guarded by his henchmen, recover the scrolls and then destroy Colo. The burrow consists of four levels: Dunes, Forest, Caverns and Ice. One scroll is hidden at each level.

You will have to search right through the cavern to find the guardian Ant Ceez, who will hand over the scroll to you.

You can jump or drop to different levels in the burrow. During your search, you will come across chests. The chests may contain bonus points or time or a balloon to help you climb a level or a magic weapon.

Use the magic weapons to exterminate Colo's henchmen. Sounds easy. But it isn't. And you'll have a whole lot of fun attempting to bring sweet news and light back to Neverland. It will take you a bit of time to work out the magic weapon

control system. You activate the one shown in the top left hand corner with the space bar. There's a lot of stuff at the top of the screen which can demand a much attention when you're trying to get out of tight spots. But this is a minor quibble.

There are seven enemies not including Colo. They are: Markko. Armed with a solid cudgel, he kills on contact. Not affected by shooting.

Goblin. Has a severe bite. Use any weapon to kill it!

Merry Goblin. Happily runs towards you and sprinkles an icy fluid to freeze your magic weapon. Use the Cross to fight him until the fluid evaporates. Skeleton. Turns you into dust if it touches. It can't be destroyed by shooting or fire.

Lift Genie. Desperately tries to catch you and take you down two levels. It can't be shot, but can be dodged.

Nicholas. He is very dangerous. You will get 5000 points when you kill him and release birds worth 1000 points. As we've already mentioned, the game takes place on three scrolling levels. You have to explore all of them thoroughly in order to discover the four scrolls. And you need all four to defeat Colo.

The graphics are colourful, the sounds are good and game play is great! Give it a magic!

- GRAPHICS
- SOUND
- VALUE
- PLAYABILITY



THE SYDNEY AFFAIR

- MACHINE: SPECTRUM/MSX12/MSX2/AMSTRAD
- SUPPLIER: INFOGRAMMES
- PRICE: £9.95
- VERSION TESTED: SPECTRUM
- REVIEWER: PAUL



A man's head appears in the sights of a gun. A shot is fired. A crimson bullet hole appears in his forehead and he slumps to the floor. Sirens begin to wail.

The scene switches. The man lies dead on the pavement, his briefcase by his side.

As a Detective Sergeant in the Crime Squad in the St Etienne (Lyon) police you must track down the killer. Yes, this is another murder hunt from the mind of former French policeman Gilles Blancin. It's similar to his previous game,

Vera Cruz, but this is a touch more sophisticated.

There are two scenes of crime to investigate — the scene around the body of the victim, Mr Sidney, and the room where the shot was fired.

You control a magnifying glass to zoom in on the clues in the man's wallet you'll find what can best be described as a compromising photograph. Could this be a reason for the killing?

In the room there are more clues to be had — a fingerprint and bullet cartridge, for instance.

Once you have discovered all of the clues you move on to the second part of the game where you can interview witnesses and suspects and use the police Diamond Network Computer.

This enables you to communicate with other police services, justice departments, prison administrations and the National Police.

Unlike Vera Cruz, in the Sydney Affair you can interview people, providing you can find them, more than once. For instance, Witness A will tell you something. But it is only when

Witness B provides you with information that you can use this to get more out of Witness A.

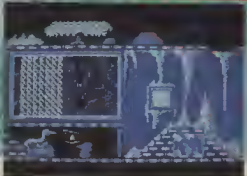
You can compile an alibi or other evidence of one person with certain facts collected during the investigation. But this comparison can only be carried out on the basis of a statement. You can also carry out different examinations for example a ballistic or autopsy.

Once you are certain of someone's guilt, it only remains for you to make an arrest.

The only thing I don't like about *The Sydney Affair* is the title. It sounds like an Australian love-mech. Apart from that, it's a highly entertaining game.

Right. In the grand tradition of the whodunit I will reveal the murderer right at the end of this review. Oh no! Don't say I'm going to run out of space! The murderer was...

- GRAPHICS
- SOUND
- VALUE
- PLAYABILITY



EQUALISER + TERMINATOR

► MACHINE: C64
► SUPPLIER: POWERHOUSE
► PRICE: £1.99
► REVIEWER: TIM

Who's a little sneaky software house then? Getting a version of *Wonder Boy*, called *Equaliser* that evades oddity, out before the official version hits the shelves. Still, at just £1.99 it's a great debut for a new budget label, Powerhouse.

Equaliser has been written for Powerhouse by Gavin Rseburn who is obviously into arcade games in a big way, 'cos he says one of his new projects will be a version of Tony Takoushi's fave game *I, Robot*.

Still, back to *Equaliser*, which isn't anything to do with that awful TV show of the same name. In fact the star of this computer version is a lot younger than the pensioner who wobbles around the streets of New York on TV. In fact his favourite streetwear appears to be an oversized nappy. But enough of these fashion notes, on with the game. Which is pretty nifty really.

It's a scrolling platform style of game with a nice driving soundtrack and pretty graphics. Basically you have to guide the *Equaliser* through a series of scenarios, fighting off nasties and leaping chasms, all in search of your captured girlfriend.

You can zap the nasties — but

don't let them gung up on you — and watch out for the flying birds who drop rocks in later screens.

Reminded me a bit of *Ghosts n' Godins* without the horror element. *Equaliser* is a really playable game, great value at this price.

Which can't really be said of Gavin's other offering *Terminator*. This is a *Urduum* clone without the slickness of the C+VG game of the year. Once again it's a horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up with a *Scream*-type landscapes. The alien nasties are pretty fast moving — which is why you need the joystick response to be a bit faster than it is. This really spoils what could be a nice cheapo blaster.

Again graphics and sound are good and there are some *Urduum* style frills — like the fruit machine type sub-game and the scrolling intro screens.

Equaliser is the best of these two offerings by far. Well worth a couple of quid of anyone's money. And you get an audio track after the games — some synthesised house music. Turn down the computer and groove along to these sounds instead!

Equaliser Summary:

► Graphics	7
► Sound	7
► Value	8
► Playability	8



REVIEWS
C+VG
14

MICRO TRIVIA

► MACHINE: AMSTRAD PCW
KING/2512
► SUPPLIER: HARRY'S
TRILE ASSOCIATES
► PRICE: 1.75
► VERSION TESTED: DISK
► REVIEWER: DAVID BISHOP

Another trivia game, this time borrowing the thoughts and creative principal of getting a horizontal, vertical, or diagonal line of three correct answers. *Micro Trivia* is for one player only, a dangerous limitation for any game of this type as one of the prime attractions of trivia games is that they give a group of people the chance to show off to each other just how smart they are (or aren't).

At the start of the game you are invited to set the timer at anything between one and 20 seconds. This determines how long you have to answer each question, but it wasn't clear if you could get a better score using a shorter time limit.

Once the timer is set, a three times three matrix of nine squares appears. Select your question by typing a number between one and nine (each relating to one of the nine squares). Each question is accompanied by four answers, one of which is correct.

Your score is not shown until you have made a line. Each answer you get right gives you a plus score while wrong answers score minus points.

The number of points scored depends on the speed with which you answer. When it becomes impossible to make a winning line, the game is time memorably brought to a premature end and your embarrassingly puny score will be displayed. The game comes with a 1,000 'pot luck' questions of varying difficulty. Further disks, each with 1,000 more questions on specific subjects, are advertised in the instructions. Subjects include sport, soap, TV and music.

Micro Trivia is a nice variation on the trivia theme but with only 1,000 questions on the disk and a similar number on each of the add ons, there must be cheaper ways of discovering the level of your mental agility.

► C64
► SDU
► VAI
► PIA: 100%

C+VG

REVIEWS

15

SHORTS
MAD NURSE

► MACHINE: SPECTRUM
► UPPLER: FIREBIRD
► PRICE: £1.99
► REVIEWER: PAUL

This game should be taken into council care. It needs help. Dad babies for entertainment. Wonderful.

Mad Nurse is not in a maternity hospital waiting with little bundles of joy. Trainee nurses appear to be in control of the action. These would be Florence Nightingales delight in such names as Nine Night Nurse and Brigade Bumwisher. Humour isn't dead even if the babies are.

The babies are used to play put and go to sleep. They crawl all over the place, emerging from medicine bottles apparently electrocuted themselves and went for it. This is the really clever — talking down a lift shaft and going split at the bottom.

MINCHER

► MACHINE: AMSTRAD CPC 464, 604 and 6128
► SUPPLIER: BUBBLE BUS
► PRICE: £1.99
► VERSION TESTED: AMSTRAD
► REVIEWER: DAVID

Continuing its asty named 'Mini Bus' line of budget games, Bubble Bus has released yet another version of that old classic Pacman. This one, called *Mincher*, has all the elements of the original including food, ghost pills, and bonus fruits which make the gobble flesh during which time you can get them.

There is a different maze design for each level. They become progressively harder to complete as the ghosts move faster and flash for less time when you eat the pills.

Control is via keyboard or joystick and can be modified. If the default keys don't suit, *Mincher* has sound effects of a budget nature but nothing to get excited about.

It looks really is somebody out there who isn't already played *Pacman* to death, then this is for you. Otherwise keep your £1.99 as there are plenty of excellent budget offerings around that are not of antique origin.

► MACHINE: SPECTRUM
► SUPPLIER: BUBBLE BUS
► PRICE: £1.99
► REVIEWER: PAUL

BUTCH
HARDGUY

► MACHINE: SPECTRUM
► SUPPLIER: ADVANCE
► PRICE: £7.95
► REVIEWER: PAUL

Hi, I'm Butch. *Butch Hard Guy*. Rough, tough and ready to duff anybody up. My motto? "Who Cares Who Wins?"

Obviously *Butch Hard Guy* is intended to be a funny take off at Rambo and the many other macho loughs of the humour, however, it stops at the cossie cover and blurb. What we have is a rather straightforward platform and ladders game.

The evil Dr. Tio Fu, the snake poked? Typhoid? Holding captive soldiers. These are scattered around the 20 screens held in each. A huge army of near indestructible guards patrol Dr. Fu's South Pacific island.

Butch only has his hands, feet and your wits to help him triumph. The guards proved instant death for me.

But, unfortunately, if you punch them in the middle they sit down and switch off for a second to destroy them. Butch has to punch them in the face and then to fire away from them as possible because they explode.

To free the prisoners, Butch has to punch and kick furiously

at the bars of their cages. Once free the race off towards a rescue helicopter. If they encounter a droid they end up back in their cage.

Butch Hard Guy is fun but really not different enough to set the world on fire. It would have been better as a budget game. You do, however, get a free *Butch Hard Guy* badge with the game. Wow!

► GRAPHICS
► SOUND
► VALUE
► PLAYABILITY

PLAN B

► MACHINE: SPECTRUM
► SUPPLIER: BUG-BYTE
► PRICE: £2.95
► VERSION TESTED: BBC
► REVIEWER: NICKY

Oh no, I thought when this latest effort from Bug-Byte dropped through the letterbox. More nasty Mode two-type graphics, sluggish sprites and poor screen response to grapple with.

But I was wrong. At last, Bug-Byte has come up with the goods. *Plan B* might not be epic arcade action, but in terms of graphics it's a million times better than anything else I've seen from the Bug-Byte stable.

The scenario is simple. You control a warrior who must destroy the main central computer in the Torgren computer complex, fighting off the guards in the process. You must find the key which opens the doors to the complex, and finally make your escape.

And it's not all a level! Above and below! Even the sound tends to add to the excitement.

You lose energy and ammo as you battle your way through the game, but both can be recovered. The complex is like a huge maze, in design vaguely reminiscent of *Repton*, but none the worse for that. There's a high score table so you can measure your progress.

Plan B is a lightweight game but it's fun to play, and very classy compared to previous Bug-Byte offerings. Definitely worth it at £2.99.

► GRAPHICS
► SOUND
► VALUE
► PLAYABILITY

AGENT
ORANGE

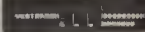
► MACHINE: SPECTRUM
AS 128, 128+ / COMMODORE
► SUPPLIER: A N F
► PRICE: £3.95
► VERSION REVIEWED: SPECTRUM
► REVIEWER: LEE

This game has a very unusual plot. You've got to save the entire universe from a gang of evil aliens. Original, eh? These aliens are plotting Trifid-type weeds, that destroy your crops

on eight planets. To stop this happening, you must fly to the final planet, and collect a cargo of alien weedkiller, nicknamed Agent Orange.

You start with a mother ship, and eight daughter vessels, but if you play well, you can sell any successful crops and buy better ships from your home planet. When you arrive at a planet, you can blast any aliens that are trying to plant more deadly weeds, and so stop the decay of any valuable crops. When you have fertile soil with the button depressed, a seed is planted, and if it reaches the ripe stage, it can be picked.

I'm sorry to say, but this is almost as bad as *Websters*, also from A N F. The screen is neither black nor grey, nor scrolls, it's a sort of mixture of both. When you're stationary, but then scrolls to the next area. Very weird, and very infuriating, especially if



Here's an alien who's ready to shoot you on the next screen. The scrolling, what I hate it, is very jerky, even for the humble Spectrum, and the sound is well below average, even on the 128 Spectrum.

The graphics are bland, and mainly black and white with only the odd bit of colour, and nearly all the planets look the same. Basically, it's not a brilliant game in fact, A N F hasn't produced a really good game since *Chase the Egg*.

► GRAPHICS
► SOUND
► VALUE
► PLAYABILITY



Controlling the nurse you must round up the babies before harm befalls them, put them in bed and collecting stray medicine bottles. Points are scored for babies saved.

During a game you have three nurses, each of which is allowed three mishaps before getting the sack.

I think this game is probably the sickest game I've ever played. Don't buy it.

► GRAPHICS
► SOUND
► VALUE
► PLAYABILITY

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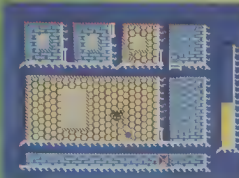
Acrojet for the Commodore 64/128k, Spectrum 48/128k and Amstrad CPC series. \$9.95. Disk E14.95.

AMSTRAD PROSE

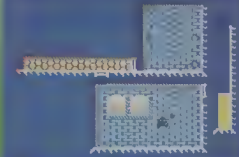
Steve Turner's

RANA

RanaRama is all set to rocket programmer Steve Turner and Hewson high into the software charts. Here C + VG presents Steve's exclusive hints and help for troubled gamers. It's straight from the horse's mouth...



▲ The frog and a wizard in a room. Cite version



▲ The frog is dead and? The frog is a frog



Unlabeled screenshot of the Spectrum version

In RanaRama you control Mervyn, a sorcerer's apprentice, a survivor of an invasion of alien warlocks.

He managed to evade capture as he had inadvertently transformed himself into a frog whilst trying to concoct a potion to make himself tall, handsome and muscular.

You have to tackle 12 wizards per level who are guarded by troops scattered over the 50 to 100 rooms on each level. The view of the rooms is from above with five or so to a screen. A room does not become illuminated until you visit it.

Once you reach a wizard, you tackle him in sub-games which require lightening reactions.

The game is basically a short 'em-up, where the nasties are continually generated to give a continuous action feel. There are eight levels of missiles, eight levels of power and eight types of shield for you to accumulate and use. The easiest way to accumulate items is to defeat wizards to win their runes and then convert the runes into the items you require.

The missiles, power and shields are all graded and the runes on the later levels are graded too.

Spell items can also be obtained randomly in certain rooms at spell points.

THE MAGIC BARBONS

The creatures you can expect to find — or who will find you.

Dwarf Warrior First level fighter. Not very intelligent, likes gold, drink and fighting.

Fire Golem Second level fighter.

Provides light and warmth in the dark and dingy depths.

Blazer Third level fighter. Formidable warriors protected by their exoskeletons.

Guardian Fourth level fighter. Protected by magic and resist magical attacks by lesser creatures.

Death Serpent Fifth level fighter. Fast and deadly.

Ghoul Sixth level fighter. These are almost invisible and will drain energy from the living.

Anachron Seventh level fighter. Man-eating spiders who have a taste for frogs.

Gargoyle Eighth level fighter. Fast, cunning and very evil.

Warlock Found on levels one to four. Will only attack you if your status is less than theirs. Otherwise they will run. Best defeated by magical combat rather than runes.

Necromancer Levels five to eight. Stronger unless you have a Power level four and high shield spell.

MAGICAL WEAPONS

Murdering Mouse Hide in run.

Sprinting Knife Slow but can attack in great numbers.

Orbiter Four steel balls rotating around a ball of energy. Slow enough to shoot.

Energy Ball Pure energy.

HOW TO SURVIVE

When you are underpowered to tackle a level remember discretion is the better part of valor.

Move quickly from room to room avoiding trouble. Pick up any energy crystals you find but remember your

▲ Is the frog in trouble here or what?

RAMA

Player's Guide



survival depends on locating the warlocks and winning their magic.

At the start of a level many doors will be hidden so have the FIND spell ready. Later when you have explored most of the level use the SEE spell and the map to locate the remaining warlocks. Remember they move about intelligently so on your way to them check their position.

A quick test to see if you have a powerful enough attack spell for a level is to shoot an object that initiates the magical attack weapons.

If the object can be destroyed in one shot you have a good chance of clearing the level and can go on the offensive blasting everything in sight. If more than one shot is needed use the evasive tactics described above. If three of four shots are needed exit the level to start a easier one.

MEANIES

Learn to recognise the enemies as there are eight types. Wounding a powerful meanie will anger him and make him very aggressive. Badly wounding a meanie will stop him or make him panic. Only take on the meanies if your attack spell can destroy in one or two shots. Run from the rest.

MAGICAL WEAPONS

If you enter a room with a small scenery object, magical attack weapons will appear around it. Either destroy the object or exit the room. There are no points for destroying the attack weapons and they are quite deadly.

If there are many initiators in a room, say a line of coffins, the best place to stand is at the end of the line on the attack

GLYPHS OF POWER

Use these to attack all meanies in a room. Do not use them if a warlock is in the room as you may destroy him, losing the chance to win his runes.

In the deeper levels use Glyphs of Power with care as they may just annoy everyone in the room so they all attack you at once!

WARLOCKS

Before you tackle them, clear the room of other meanies so you have a good chance of picking up the runes. Try to tackle the warlock in a small room or a corner so the runes cannot go far. When you chase the runes take care not to accidentally leave the room or they disappear

MAGIC GAME

This is a lot easier than it seems at first. Concentrate on one letter of the word at a time and sort it to its place. I usually start with the M or the N as they are easy to find. Some people find it easier to start with the first letter R and sort out the letters one at a time left to right. You only have to place about three letters. The rest usually fall in to place on their own.

There is no time to think, do not try to unravel the word in your head just pick a letter and keep that fire button and joystick moving. You will soon get the knack of moving one letter right across the word by co-ordinating firing and joystick. The joystick must be centred between moves so a typical move may require left, left, left to place the cursor over the required pair of letters fire right fire right fire right fire to move the letter

USING YOUR RUNES

If you are MORTAL use whatever runes you have to fire up a power spell or your life energy will drain away and the game.

It is wise to fire up another energy spell if you can whenever the frog starts flexing croaking and looking very miserable. They you will avoid being MORTAL and being transported to a random room where it may be difficult to find a Glyph of Magic to replenish your spell.

Try to balance your spells taking note of your drain shows on the spell screen. If it shows anything other than minutes your power spell is not ready high enough for

all the other spells running.

Use runes sparingly, it is not a big advantage using high level power or shields until you need them.

When you tackle a new level be even to reequip unless you have already done so in clearing the previous level. To stand a chance on a level you need power attack and defence spells of the runes level.

Levels are numbered in increasing difficulty left to right then top to bottom. The shield spells are essential on the lower levels to reduce damage. Without them a single hit is fatal.

OVERALL STRATEGY

It pays to clear the levels one at a time in order of difficulty. To get maximum points destroy all meanies before eliminating the last warlock on a level. When you leave a level without warlocks their minions will disappear

Try to end each level with enough runes to give you a chance at the next level. This may mean leaving meanies alive. Only spend extra time annihilating a level if you have the spare runes to do so.

POHORANNE PROFILE

Steve Turner is the owner behind a whole array of top ten lists for Hewson including *Dragonarc*, *Amulet*, *Astro-Crane* and *Qixatron*.

In his early thirties, Steve has been programming for 17 years. He attended one of the first schools to have its own computer club which allowed him to use a computer with a 512 bytes.

After leaving school Steve continued to utilize his programming prowess both at work in the

Card Service and at home on his first computer, an old style ZX80. He eventually gave up job to concentrate on games programming.



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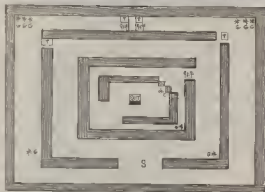
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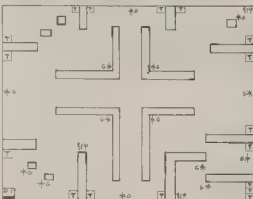
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The name behind the great games



LEVEL 5



LEVEL 6

Here, as promised, are the next 3 levels of Gauntlet from Denny Blackman. This game by US Gold was yet another winner in the

Golden Joystick Awards — picking up Game of the Year and runner-up in Arcade Game of the Year.

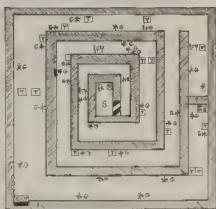
ATARI

ATARI

More for the Atari — this time from Jonathan French of Norfolk. First of all *Weihek* — after level 4, during an attack of alien craft occasionally a flashing alien different to the others will appear. Just fire one shot at it, and it will transform into a flashing spring-shaped craft. Move your ship to dock with it, and you will find your firepower will increase giving you a better chance of clearing the later difficult levels.

On the same game, if you are very lucky an alien ship will suddenly appear next to your ship. This will cause no aliens to attack you, until the end of level. Don't move near it though, as more

often than not it will disappear. *Bounty Bob Strikes Back* — Load the game as normal. Then press the option key for the game adjustment section. Change the special code to 61,800. Then press F key and Option together. Start the game as normal, but if you press any of the following keys you will have various effects. Q — advance 1 level. A — down 1 level. F — toggles 'float mode' on/off when on, it allows you to move anywhere on the screen. Pressing a combination of keys will warp you to the screen in 2 then 3 takes you to screen 23 or 0 then 5 takes you to level 5.



LEVEL 4

MSX

MSX

Here are some hints for MSX games from a regular reader of this column — Guy Langley. Look out for Guy's name elsewhere in the magazine as he is going to start reviewing the MSX games we receive in the office.

Tri-blazer — always move at top speed, and use the jump squares to leap rather than your own jump. On the screens that include the world 'Shann' move to the right, and try to get up a steady rhythm of bounces. Beware of the two green patches on 'wooly' (mmp). Always save at least one bounce for the second patch, and don't use them all up on the first.

On *Heckers Evil Holes* use the white squares as though they are surrounded by normal ones. When you are stuck on the cyan patches (the reverse controls,

steer towards the black squares and you will finish miraculously unscathed) also beware of levels H, L and K. Guy warns that these are real killers.

Velkyr — on the first levels don't try to shoot the diving firing drones. Try for the ones that get stuck and spin. It is also a good idea to clear the skies of motherships these take three blasts and when destroyed release three or four xenium (?) pods on explosion. By the way, to detonate the bomb, it is CAPS on the keyboard and not pull the joystick back.

Cyberun — collect first the two rocket boosters that are close to the starting point and then go to collect the rocket launchers — invaluable for exploration into caves.

ATARI ST

Roger Wyatt is the first reader to send in tips for the ST and they are for *World Games*.

Weightlifting — with the snatch Roger is a bit slumped, but with the clean and jerk he's got it down to a T. Grip the bar, then pull forward to start the lift, as the bar reaches your man's chest pull back. Then wait for your man to breathe in and out twice. At the end of the last breath pull forward and then wait again for the same amount of time as before. Pull back to jerk the bar over your man's head. Wait once more for a full breath and then straighten your legs and you should get a full

225

Cliff Diving — to get a high score dive straight for as long as possible and land in deep water. *Logrolling* — if you start the log rolling as soon as you start the game you can throw your opponent with no problem.

Cabin Tossing — to get top speed move your joystick twice as fast as your man's legs. Go faster and faster until your log starts to go back behind you. Keep going until the log straightens out, then begin your throw. Wait until the log is at an angle of 60°, then flip your log.

**JON RITMAN AND BERNIE DRUMMOND
PRESENT DOUBLE TROUBLE ...**



•ENTHRALLING•COMICAL•DAZZLING•

Hi! My name's Mr. Head. Some say I'm the one with the brains but I don't think my flat footed friend would agree. I'm a real sharp shooter, but without my pal Mr. Heels I'd get nowhere fast... or slow! I can jump like a flea and even glide but Heels is the Daley Thompson of the two of us - he's FAST! Together, if we can find each other, we really do make an awesome twosome, and that's the only way we can overcome the emperor Blacktooth. The last time we entered Castle Blacktooth we found the crowns of THREE of the suppressed kingdoms but by that time I'd run out of doughnut ammunition and my buddy was lost somewhere in the Safari world - it was the closest we had come to defeating that rascalion - we were jumping for joy, splitting our sides, dying with laughter... we were Head over Heels!

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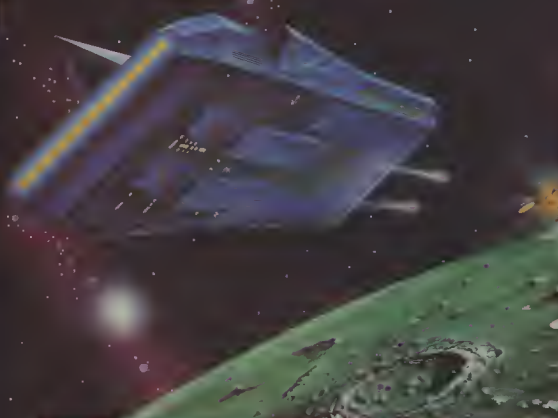
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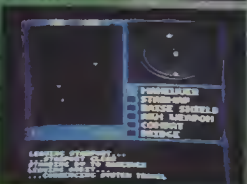
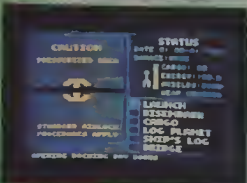
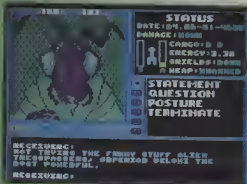
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QUICKSLA

Why has the number one Stateside software house decided to invade this green and pleasant land and set up a proper HQ in the heart of the mighty metropolises? Is it because there's some really ace coders hiding out over here? Or are they trying on the hard sell to convince YOU that bigger and better games come from the US of A? C+VG went to see Trip Hawkins, big boss of Electronic Arts to find out while our American contributing editor, Marshall M. Rosenthal, brings you news of EA's latest games which show just why the company can call itself numero uno!

TRIP'S TOP TIPS



"I U.S. are Gold then we must be platinum!" says EA boss Trip Hawkins. Big words from the big country — but they sum up the reasons behind Electronic Arts' move to set up a new base in London.

Trip says that over the last few years games made in the USA have been going down well over here — so why not cut out the middle man and bring in the games direct? That way EA can get more feedback on the sort of games YOU want and have more control over the quality of conversions. Simple, huh?

Well, not really. But it's a start. And in a bid to find out precisely what sort of games you want to play EA have been running some "focus groups" — bunches of game fanatics gathered together to talk about what they want to get out of a game. After all US games players are different — they often want things which aren't relevant to people in the rest of the world.

These "focus groups" show just how serious EA are about claiming the number one title over here too.

Meanwhile Trip is looking forward to the development of the personal interactive compact disc scene — the next major revolution! This should be like an Amiga with a built in CD player.

Imagine that! All the power of the Amiga added to the incredible storage capacity of an optical disc. The mind boggles, eh?

Christmas '88 is the time Trip predicts that you'll be seeing this wonder-gizmo. Until then you'll have to make do with your normal run of the mill machines. But rest assured, Electronic Arts aim to make owning them a lot more fun.

How? With games like **Autoduel** and **Starflight**, that's how. Let our US super-spy Marshall M. Rosenthal tell you ALL about them.

Starflight is a comprehensive role-playing game — 270 star systems, 800 planets and seven alien races with their own language and cultures to figure out and explore.

You begin at the **Starport**. Choose your crew wisely. Humans are good at



learning new skills, but aren't very durable. The insect-like Velox is good at using tools but not too bright.

Androids are tough as nails, but can't learn what hasn't been programmed in them. The last two races, the Thynn and Elowan are problematic in that the two races hate each other, and will show it at every opportunity.

Crews can be trained to become more effective in their jobs, but it costs of course. The Science Officer can increase his ability to analyze sensor readings, while the Navigator can become more adept at determining the presence of the continuum fluxes in space (which allows near instantaneous inter-dimensional travel).

The Engineer can learn about the latest repair techniques, while the Communications Officer can hone the skills needed to communicate more efficiently. Lastly, the Doctor can bone up (get it?) on surgery techniques.

The Spaceport is also where you check on messages, make financial arrangements and see how many credits you've acquired.

Perhaps the most important section of the Spaceport is the Ship Outfitting.

This is where you can change your vessel's configuration; adding better equipment and stronger weapons.

Once in space, turn to the Ship's console which consists of four separate screens. The Main View Screen occupies the most space, displaying

spatial data and tactical information during Encounters.

The Auxiliary View Screen indicates the ship's status as well as sensor information from the Science Officer and Engineering.

The Control Panel is used to inform/contact the crew about command decisions, while the Text Window contains all Incoming/outgoing messages.

During an Encounter (peaceful or otherwise), the Science Officer will use sensors to determine the mass and power status of the opposing vessel.

Communications will allow you to decide on a posture — friendly, hostile or absequalous. The decision here can make all the difference between obtaining useful information, or having to shoot it out. *Starlight* is a rich mix of adventure, strategy and action.

You're probably wondering how I got into this mess. So am I. It was supposed to be a simple enough courier job, plenty of empty highway, and speed keeping me ahead of trouble. But here I am, pinned to the steering wheel, nothing working, and that big sucker bearing down on me for the kill.

As long as I've got this radio channel open, I might as well tell you — unknown listener — just what led up to this whole fiasco.

After the bus dropped me off at the local Truck stop, I rested a few minutes, and listened to some old geezers talking about the local bondit situation two miles out of town.

I bought some body armour, and suntered out into the City.

Passing the garage, I thought again at how some drivers keep a roster of three four or more cars, but I never could get into that.

The Automated Assembly Line complex was busy as always. I kept an moving, pinching my nose while going past the Salvage Yard (the old weapons and damaged cars there tend to stink), and went to check out Uncle Albert's Auto and Gunner Shop.

I know what you're thinking. No car so why look at weapons? Let's just say I like to plan ahead.

That done, I headed over to the Arena.

The schedule indicated that A-night would be tomorrow, so I headed back to the Truck Stop and got a room for the night.

I woke up bright and early and went over to look through the latest maps at the American Autoduel Association.

I ogled the courier missions up for grabs. I had the smarts and skills needed for two of the three offered, and I could feel my blood starting to boil. Now I was in the proper mood for tonight's fun 'n' games.

I stopped off and checked my Clone-Insurance. My other body was doing okay, and the brain tape I had stored was close enough to my present status so I didn't have to fork over any more credits to update it.

I had the Assembly Line turn me out at half little number. Good suspension, strong armour on the back and sides, solid tyres and a

punchy power-ploni.

I took to the road. Mostly I had an easy time at it. Radar showed any groupings of cars, and since bandits tend to hang together — I just steered clear of them. If there was one thing I didn't want to encounter, it was the mysterious Mr Big and his ratpack.

Everything was going great until this jerk of a professional duelist pulled up alongside and started making obscene gestures.

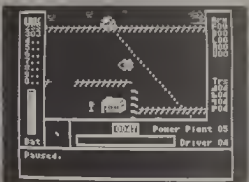
Next thing I know, there's these two jokers on my tail lassing lead and firing heavy rockets. I managed to scorch one of them, and he spun around and collided with his buddy before exploding. Radar showed another five come up last, so I abandoned the road, and deloured to a mountain pass.

That's where he was waiting for me. As far what happened, try to imagine turning a steep corner at top speed and meeting an immovable object.

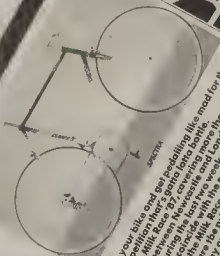
The crash must've knocked me out for a few seconds. I came to, and found myself stuck like a fly on a spider's web with doom about to knock on my door.

The driver's getting out. He's just standing there, gloating. Too bad he never heard Pete's last and most important lesson, always have an ace up your sleeves. In this case, that's the lake air-scoop aimed right at his belly. With the little machine gun inside that's connected to the foot switch I'm tapping now.

I kind of hope he is hungry 'cause he's about to eat 20 rounds of flaming lead!



MILK RACE COMPETITION
Name _____
Address _____
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Please state make of computer _____



On your bike and get pedalling like mad for the competition that's going to take more than 1,100 miles during the last two weeks in May. The Milk Race '87, covering more than 1,100 miles between Newcastle and London, takes place during the last two weeks in May. So what are the prizes? First prize is an all expenses day out on the Milk Race computer game. Plus a hand built Spectra 12 speed racing bike. The next 50 runners-up will get a copy of the game.

Just answer the following questions and send your answers to the Milk Race Competition, Farringham Lane, London EC1R 3AU. The closing date is May 15th.
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C+VG COMPETITION MILK RACE

Shh! Don't breathe a word to anybody about this competition. It's top secret. Keep it to yourself and improve your chances of winning.

Really it's two competitions in one. So if you are a BBC or Atari XL/XE owner then keep on reading. If not, just go green with envy.

The common link between the two competitions is RalUCA's super spy hero, Rick Hansen.

For BBC owners we've got 15 copies of The Rick Hansen Trilogy — Sage of a Spy to give away. This consists of the three Hansen games — Rick Hansen, Proport Tactics and Mycroft.

Prizes for Atari owners are 18 copies of Rick Hansen on disc. All you have to do is answer our spy questions and send the answers to Rick Hansen Competition, Computer + Video Games, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringham Lane, London EC1R 3AU. The closing date is May 15th and the final spycatcher's decision is final.

Questions.

1) Which secret agent is known as 007 and has a Licence to Kill?

2) The Fourth Protocol is a new blockbuster spy film. Who wrote the book on which the film is based?

3) Who played the spy-catcher George Smiley in the television series Smiley's people?

RICK HANSEN COMPETITION

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THE SETTING

The game is set in New York City in the late 1990's. You role-play the part of a gangleader who controls a group of misguided youths. The city has severely deteriorated. The brave citizens who remain are now in a life and death struggle with the ever increasing number of drug-crazed street gangs. The New York Police Department is severely undermanned.

Your main goal is to become a very powerful gang. This is measured by building your gangs turf into one of the largest and by becoming one of the richest, toughest, and most notorious gangs in the city. This will allow you to enter the MOB, and maybe later, become the Godfather.

On a typical turn you could send your Pros, Punks and 'Cruits out to take over a couple of city blocks and ambush an enemy gang, rob or firebomb a building, buy and sell drugs, have yourselves a party, terrorize the residents, and much more.

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25 players compete to be the ultimate ruler by controlling all the developed cities in the kingdom or with an alliance. A typical game lasts about 18 months, with the first knockout usually starting after six months. Each player is given a bag of a fantasy race or a powerful charismatic character. You can recruit (role, wisdom and control) powerful creatures such as dragons, your characters will capture and control cities upon which you can spend gold to improve security, workshop production, defenses, and maintain and enlarge your army. With gold you can undertake magical research, spies, search out enemy strongholds, and then at famous acts of sabotage, theft and assassination. These are just a few options available to a player in Earthwood. Earthwood is a computer moderated turn of the turn sheets and replies are written in plain English.

No need to look through complex charts and code books to understand this game.



CRAZYMOB WORLD

Europe's most popular play by mail game. The fantasy campaign game with over 1,000 player battles, weekly participation. To enter, send £5.00 for rules, setup, first three turns and to play the latest newsletter. Further turns £1.75 each.

NEW

CAPITOL

To enrol in Capitol send a £6.00 cheque/PO to International Monetary Order payable to KJC Games. For this you will receive the rulebook, setup and first two turns. Each turn of Capitol costs £1.75 for the first 60 orders. Each additional 50 orders costs 75p. European players are welcome.

EARTH WOOD

To enrol in Earthwood send a £5.00 cheque/PO payable to KJC Games. For this you receive the rulebook, setup and first three turns. Future turns are £1.50.

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Muskets & Mules

Muskets and Mules is the only Historical Play-By-Mail game currently running in Britain. Steve Badsey, C+VG's History Man, bravely shoulders arms and, equipped with a large supply of stamps, sets out to wage war by mail.

Play-By-Mail — or PBM for short — is a strategy game in which players never meet but send their orders and receive reports through the post from a central controller.

Perhaps it should be called PAY By Mail, since the controller is a business company which charges the players for each move, with them playing in until they've either reached their objectives or had enough.

In return, the players get last service, a challenging game which they would otherwise never see, and the assurance that someone else is looking after the game mechanics — or rather something else, since with a few exceptions all PBM games are computer-mediated, and PBM itself is substantially the creation of the computer revolution.

PBM began in the United States, and is still far more important there than in this country, but there are already 24 British PBM firms, and perhaps 30,000 players.

At the moment PBM covers everything from fantasy gaming, including the highly popular *Trobes of Crane* game, to modern politics with games like *Global Supremacy*, or even the futuristic fantasy of C+VG's very own *Domination* (announced last November).

But the only PBM historical wargame running in this country is a four-player game of strategy and diplomacy in central Europe.

between 1805 and 1809, at the height of Napoleon's power.

Called *Muskets and Mules*, the game has been in existence for less than a year, but already has 10 participating teams. It is run from just outside Cambridge by the PBM firm *Historical Engineering*, whose head, Aiden Powlesland, promises "state of the time travel art".

I met Aiden in the tea room of the Cambridge University Library — well, you don't get disturbed that way. He turned out to be a 26-year-old with a history degree, management and programming training, wild staring eyes and an Apple Macintosh Plus.

He started wargaming the way we all did, by simply never giving up his toy soldiers, and in fact *Muskets and Mules* arose from a tea-year-old dissatisfaction with an old board game of the Napoleonic Wars that he used to play. Basic historical research came from a few standard textbooks on the period, which has provided a surprisingly realistic setting for the game.

Muskets and Mules plays on a hex patterned map representing central Europe from Metz to Brest-Litovsk (look it up!) and from the Baltic to southern Italy. I was glad to see Italy included, it often gets left out of games, but it had a vital effect on strategy. The food players eat back one of the main powers of the period together with all their land forces — France, Prussia, Russia and Austria.

The game starts in 1805 with France at war with Russia and Austria but Prussia neutral. Minor states like Bavaria and the Kingdom of Italy (southern Italy) are either neutral or allied to one of the major powers. The question of how these minor states behave

is covered in depth by the attractively packaged rule book for the game, which includes a very fine Hussar on the cover and extracts from contemporary newspapers inside.

If, at times, the rules look like a mathematical problem that you can't solve, this is meant to reproduce the problems of controlling Napoleon's *Grande Armée*. My own reaction was to grumble about "playing the rules, not the game", and about "hex-shaped rules", but Aiden has found that most players prefer such complex rules, and get a lot of game satisfaction from making them work.

It is a truism that when refiguring a historical campaign most wargamers will find out what actually happened, avoid all the mistakes made by the real-life commanders, and in the process find even more spectacular mistakes of their own to make. What really happened in 1805 was that Napoleon confronted an Austrian thrust into Bavaria by encircling the Austrians with his own army and forcing them to surrender at Ulm.

He then pressed on to Vienna and northward to his greatest victory, the destruction of the combined Austrian and Russian armies at Austerlitz. So far in *Muskets and Mules* no French players has managed anything quite as flashy — but then, not every player is Napoleon. Most Austrian players have begun the game by pushing forward into Bavaria, which meant they haven't read their history books or they think they can do better.

One enterprising Austrian went instead for Italy, and has just forced the French to conclude peace with a substantial loss of French-held territory. Not have the Prussians been idle in keeping up diplomatic pressure.

Some of the diplomatic exchanges are important, others are just for fun. "As for your Majesty's supply problems," wrote one harassed Austrian to his Russian ally, "I would send you some ink but my courier would probably drink it — he drinks everything else."

The players submit their orders each turn (two or three weeks real time, depending on taste) both in writing and in the form of specially marked maps. The computer then generates maps in the next move showing the players the precise location and condition of their troops, together with anything known about their enemies and allies.

Muskets and Mules is believed to be the only PBM game which provides this map service, the

effect of which is to greatly simplify play. Without the computer it would take four times as long to produce the material each move.

The problem is that it costs quite a lot. The rule book must be bought for just under £10, and thereafter each move is charged at between £11 for the cheapest, Prussia, to £14 for the most expensive, the French.

The high cost is due in part to the game being in its early stages — Aiden says that as more players start to play *Muskets and Mules* the price will come down — and it does provide the player with rapid, reliable, moves at regular intervals. I have played postal campaigns run for pleasure in which the only cost was the postage, but I will admit that moves happened at rather irregular intervals of about six months each, and that such campaigns are hard to find.

As the only British historical PBM wargame on the market it has already attracted a few overseas players, and those who play it seem to devote a lot of thought to it. One even phoned in a set of corrections from the bath! If anyone is really rich, Aiden will arrange delivery of game reports by horseback for a mere £2,000 a time.

Meanwhile, an even larger PBM game is being planned, called tentatively *Saunders and Shadows* and covering the entire war theatre in Europe, the Mediterranean and the Atlantic between 1796 and 1810.

My overall impression is that *Muskets and Mules* is a good mixture of the standard hen-type game and the postal diplomatic game, combining some of the best elements of both.

The forces on all sides are structured with reasonable historical accuracy, and the player can exercise control down about as far as brigade level, which is as low as any commander should wish to go.

However, the only way to test a game is to play it, and there is a vacancy coming up in one game shortly for *Czar* of all the Russians. I shall enjoy playing that role in 1805 — it was, after all, only five years from when the Russians invaded Switzerland!



Hi, this is Wayne again, bringing you the brightest and biggest PBM pages around. This issue there's another of my Wonder Offers, news of the recent PBM convention plus readers comments. All this and the first of our heavy metal music review columns. Enjoy!

The Second British P.B.M. Conference

I've received loads of requests to go into further detail about the conference as some people couldn't make it. Your wish is my command!!

Over 1000 P.B.M.ers from all over Europe gathered together at the Porchester Hall, Queensway, London for the highlight of the P.B.M. calendar.

Inside the hall they had a chance to visit stalls from over 20 companies and examine over 100 P.B.M. games at their leisure.

It was their chance to ask questions directly to the gamesmasters and find out exactly what their games were all about.

Visitors could also take part in a real life roleplaying adventure which was being run by The Labyrinth organisation — featured in C+VG a couple of issues ago. This involved wandering into smoke filled rooms, with nought but a padded sword and shield, looking for treasure and getting involved in punch-ups with real monsters.

There were roleplaying competitions, run by the more than capable Freedom Warriors with many trophies up for grabs.

One award which was very well received by the crowd was "The farthest distance travelled to get to the Conference award". This was

won by a gentleman who came from Berne, Switzerland!! Other close contenders came from Holland, Belgium and the very north of Scotland.

You could even enter the C+VG Ikari Warriors competition to try and win the many prizes on offer from the highest score every hour!

There were live combat sessions in the form of tavern room brawls, with authentic costumes and weapons, from various re-enactment societies.

Many free turns, start up packages and t-shirts were given away, most of them by me, to the people answering silly questions I was asking from the stage.

At the end of the day, over 300 people were still waiting behind to hear the results of the votes for the various awards that were up for grabs.

It's A Crime

The first point I would like to make about anyone intending to play this game is that it depicts American street "gang" activities and morals. Some of the terms that are used during a gang's actions may be offensive to some people. It is suggested that young children or anyone of an impressionable nature should not play this game.

Have you ever seen the film called 'The Warriors' in which a 'American street gang' have to fight their way across various gangs' turfs to get home?



Well, this game is very similar to the film.

You become the leader of a street gang who's main aim is to become the meanest, roughest, toughest gang in the area — as well as controlling the biggest area of Turf.

Once you have done this, a selected few of you become noticed by the mob and they promote you to Boss status. Then it is up to you ultimately to become The Godfather by wiping out all the other bosses. People intending to play *It's a Crime* should note that it is a computer moderated, fixed deadline game. This means that a computer processes all your actions and these are limited to the ones that are either printed in the rulebooks or discovered as the game progresses.

Furthermore, your turns have to be in by a certain date or you will be at a severe disadvantage. For example, your turn sheet could be sitting on your mantelpiece when it should have been sent in, and another gang controlled by another player has already ordered an all out attack on your gang!!

Once you have given your gang an original name, no longer than 20 characters, you send them out on the road to fame. Look up in the rulebook what actions you would like them to perform and set them to it. You can do ANY of the following:

Ambush: This is your chance to ambush another gang on their Turf. You send a bunch of your gang to attack and inflict heavy casualties on the victims of your choice.

Buy: With this order you can buy either shotguns or machine-guns to increase your attacking strength. You can also buy small bombs to blow up buildings or streetdope to push and make large financial profits.

Control: Probably the most important order in the game. This allows some of your gang members to enter a block and either terrify the residents or combat the ruling gang for the right to control the block and receive the protection money.

Enlist: This gives you the chance to abduct some new members of your gang.

Fire bomb: To obtain maximum effect you should have already purchased some small bombs (See *Buy*) when issuing this order. If you are successful you usually receive a payment for your troubles.

Mug: This order sends some of your people out to mug some unfortunate person.

Robbery: You send some of your gang to rob a particular building and you fence the stolen items for cash.

When you start off you only have twelve orders to select from. As you get further into the game the number of orders available increases to about 20.

Once you have played the game for several turns you get into the swing of things. At the bottom of your turn results sheet is a section devoted to special meetings and 'The New York City Post'.

You get a special meeting about once every five rounds. Usually an ex-leader of your gang turns up and gives you advice or special orders that you can use to increase your gang's capability.

I have had the chance to buy some walkie talkies, which increase the defence strength of your blocks, recruit a martial arts expert and buy some dodgy development shares in a building from an equally dodgy relative of mine.

The building concerned "mysteriously" burnt down and I received a large insurance payoff for my troubles.

The New York City Post is a list of random crimes and

we will rock you

When the Ed appeared in the office dressed in torn denims, studded leather jacket, dripping chains and a handful of grease in his hair, we knew something was up. "Do ya wanna rock?" he yelled. He then introduced the mysterious Wayne Bootleg, C+VG's new music an, and made a editorial decision: WE WILL ROCK YOU.

For quite a while C+VG has debated who, their or not to have a music page. We know you people out there must have other interests apart from computer linked hobbies.

So as we like to try anything once, here is *Musical Mayhem*. The aim will be to review mainly rock and heavy metal albums, but we are open to suggestion if you want other types of music covered, than just write in and tell us.

Also, continuing in great C+VG tradition of giving lots of things away by running competitions, the first five people to write into this page and name the current lead singer of Deep Purple will win a copy of any album reviewed in this page. **DARK ANGEL: Darkness Decends.** (Under One Flag.)

Since their formation in 1983 and despite various line-up changes, Dark Angel have always been praised in the Metal underground scene as the leaders of *Thrash Metal*.

They have released just one previous L.P. called *We Have Arms* ed which was hailed as a metallic masterpiece and it left a hard act to follow. However follow it they have done, with an album that is so heavy it defies belief!!

With an obvious liking for death and the dark (five of the seven tracks have titles that refer to death in darkness), Dark Angel fit through this album leaving a

wave of distorted, crippled and twisted musical notes in their wake.

The lyrics are about darkness, despondency and death and lead singer Don Dokty shouts them out fast and furiously. The opening track, *Iron* which the album gets its name, literally leaps out of your speakers and hit you like a punch.

STRYPER: To Hell With The Devil. (Music For Nations.) A complete change of tack now Stryper are a Christian Heavy Metal band and boy do they let you know it.

Every chance they get they aim it down your throat.

I could handle all the songs being about Jesus and God, I could handle all the Bible quotes plastered all over the album, I could even handle the way they give acknowledgement to Jesus Christ in the special thanks column as if he was some kind of roadie or stage manager, but the clincher was the picture of the band on the back cover! Four guys, standing there made up to the nines with loads of make up—so much so it wasn't for me, guy's hairy chest I'd swear he was a woman—all dressed in skin-tight, crotch hugging yellow and black outfits and one of them has got Jesus on studs over his right breast. Not your common of garden Christmas by a long chalk.

Leaving the band's religious stance for the moment to concentrate on the album, Stryper with this release have shown what



a competent band of musicians, they are.

Their music is very much in the early Rainbow style, plus a touch of Boston, which leads to high pitched vocals and lead guitar supported by an able rhythm section. They contrast heavy raunchy tracks like *To Hell With The Devil* with quiet ballads like *Free and Honest*, but a jazz doesn't quite come off.

METALLICA: Master of Puppets. (Music For Nations.)

I was really looking forward to this album after hearing their last release *Ride The Lightning*, which was a superb album. However I found this album slightly disappointing as some of their originality seems to have been lost.

One point of interest is that the band seem at a loss how and when to end a song. I lost track of where I was several times as the album stopped and started on various occasions.

JOE SATRIANI: Not Of This Earth.

Question: Do you like technically brilliant guitar playing, drum machines, instruments plus a selection of various shades of rock? If your answer to the above is yes, buy this album.

When I received this album I thought "Joe Who? Never heard of him!" So I went and checked up on him. I was impressed with what I found to say the least.

Not only in great demand as a studio session player and a teacher (some of his former pupils have included such greats as Steve Vai of David Lee Roth Band, Kirk Hammett of Metallica and Larry Lalonde of Possessed), Joe also writes, arranges and co-produces all his own music.

On the album he does all the above mentioned as well as play bass, keyboards and percussion. He does lots of other things too, but to my mind what he does best is **PLAY**.

This album was a joy to listen to, the absence of vocals bring a refreshing change.

Q5. When the Mirror Cracks. (Music For Nations, MFN 64) This is another band that seems to be quite a bit mixed up. Listening to the album I potted down about seven bands that they sounded like, from Genesis to Whitesnake.

The band are based upon the old format of crashing choruses, controlled guitar bursts and semi-romantic songs. In *The Rat* is a typical example of this, with lead singer Jonathan K screaming Will You LOVE me in between flashes of guitar and drums.

Their melodic sound apart, the album is very well produced by Floyd Rose (their lead guitarist) and it is clear that he has all the knowledge and skill to make a potential dull album sound quite exciting.

METAL TOP TEN

- 1.) Metallica: *Master of Puppets* (MFN 60).
- 2.) Metallica: *Ride the Lightning* (MFN 27).
- 3.) Metallica: *Kill 'em All* (MFN 7).
- 4.) Anthrax: *Spreading the Disease* (MFN 62).
- 5.) Manowar: *Hail to England* (MFN 19).
- 6.) Stryper: *To Hell With The Devil* (MFN 70).
- 7.) Wasted: *The good, The Bad, They Wasted* (MFN 43).
- 8.) Wendy O'Williams: *W.O.W.* (MFN 24).
- 9.) Tank: *This Means War* (MFN 3).
- 10.) Twelfth Night: *Art and Illusion* (MFN 36).





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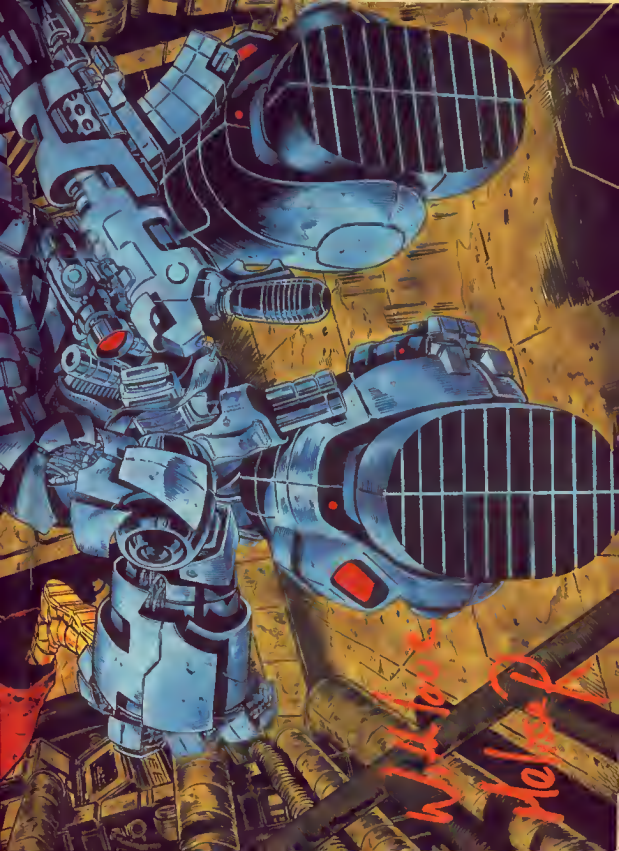
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female, of course, due to my incredibly sexy body and dreamy good looks) swamping me

● The technique of the Red Herring is only effective if the useless object is truly useless, and cannot possibly be used otherwise. I am now stuck at the very end of *Robin of Sherlock*, having released

Hurn from the wardrobe. He is described as being tied up, so presumably I am supposed to free him. FREE HURN, no

RELEASE HURN
UNITE HURN... UNITE
ROPES, BONDS, CORDS

'Oops, well and truly stuck. Wait a minute, what about the carving knife I am carrying? CUT/CARVE HURN/ROPE etc... NO!

In desperation I consulted my index of clues from magazines, and am told it is a dud. Assuming this is true, then we have here a solution where the knife could be used and I long to know why the bonds cannot be cut with a knife. The trouble is, this is the logical thing to do, and I cannot think on the illogical wavelenght Fergus expects me to. Oris just poor vocabulary I am struggling with — his not mine?

There is nothing wrong with including red-herrings within games, as long as that is what they are. The danger lies when the author does not anticipate possible uses of the object, and fails to allow for them. *Malcolm Harden, Sheppey*

● Your greatest fan here once again. And I am now completely and utterly famous. I cannot step outside my own front door without hordes of worshippers (mostly

The reason? ANOTHER (swagget) mention in your brilliant pages! The waves of shock and happiness were too much for me, and I have been emotionally drained for nigh on a week now.

Nice one, Keith, for such a great review of *Bard's Tale*. I personally am sick and tired of getting hyper-reviews for bad adventures. I bought it before reading your review, and was extremely disappointed.

By the way, take a look at the *Dr Who* review (January, P23) and you will notice something very strange. The reviewer is "Tim", am I correct? Timothy Churchmouse? Tim the speaking clock? NO! Timothy Metcalfe, the EDITOR! And what do we notice in the second column, nine lines down? I quote "(Don't start that again! Ed.)" Hee hee, I thought, another jovial insert from Mr Big! But wait! He is also doing this review! No wonder your adventure column hasn't taken over the entire mag (which it should) — the Ed is obviously utterly deranged and completely off his rocker — he talks to himself during his OWN REVIEWS!

Mike Thomas,

Caerphilly

P.S. I am in love with Clare Edgely. Can you please print a piccy of her, and give her a kiss from me? I love her, I love her. I love her.

Keith's reply: Printing the piccy is a matter for he who talks to himself, Mike. But consider the other matter accomplished. We at C+VG

MAIL

will do anything in the interests of reader service...

● You may be interested to hear that Melbourne House, in whom I have great faith, refused to exchange my tape copy of *Lord Of The Rings* for a disk, even on payment of the difference! I hardly think that type of customer service is good for their reputation. In fact, I was told by a rather impatient sounding lady on the phone, that if I wanted a disk version I should go out and buy one! Not that that helped, because I couldn't find an outlet that sold them! *Richard Dawson, Newcastle*

Keith's reply: In my old TRS-80 days, I dealt frequently with a specialist software firm called Mollmerx. It was their standard practice to offer a disk upgrade for a cover charge, on return of an original tape. Ahh — times change. You'd have thought that with the profits flying around these days, firms would be happy to oblige!

● I lie in a darkened room suffering from possibly terminal shock, my new copy of C+VG lying on the floor. Is the price increase of 2p responsible for this state, or Tony Takoulas's rambling? No, it is because I see in the 'Next Month' column that as from the March issue, you will be printing COMPLETE solutions to certain adventures. To say I am quashed is an understatement!

Only last June, in your July issue, you criticised the Danish magazine *Computer* for the printing of the solution to *Hulk* (the same game as you plan to start your series, coincidence?). Many is the time you have answered those that want such a feature, by saying that it spoils all the

enjoyment of the game, dues are a much better help source, etc.

Why this sudden (and unexpected) change of policy? I have been a loyal reader since issue 8, and never before have you suggested this, so why now? I would be most interested to hear your reasons, but in the meantime, call for the series of solutions to be stopped.

The adventure column in C+VG is the best on in Europe to my knowledge, don't spoil it now.

William Hern, Inverurie, Aberdeen
Keith's reply: Thanks for the compliments, William. What I said about *Computer* was tongue-in-cheek, a bit of general banter between Christian Martensen and myself! *Hulk* was chosen to start with, due to the very large number of letters received requesting help for that game. But read on...

● I read in this month's C+VG with horror. What's this? As of next issue you'll be printing complete solutions to adventures? Oh come on!

I've been reading C+VG ever since that first October issue years ago, and most of your changes have been for the best. It was C+VG that first caught my interest in computers, and C+VG more specifically your articles, that got me into adventures.

However, I must say that this new idea is probably the worst you've come up with so far. Please tell me it WASN'T your idea?

Bethell Bethell, Walsall

Keith's reply: There are people who want solution, and those that don't. I have very mixed feelings about it, but decided to give the idea a try for a few months.

ADVENTURE



HELPLINE



From one month to the next, it's strange how the spread of games mentioned in the *Helpline* mailbox changes. Of course, there're always the old favourites, like the *Mystenous Adventures*, Infocom, and Scott Adams classics, guaranteed to bring a sprinkling of problems every month. And then there's the somewhat expected 'new entrants'. This month has seen a noticeable increase in *Pawn* problems — only to be expected as new machine versions have started to appear at an increasing rate.

But an unexpected phenomenon has been an upsurge of questions on *Sinbad* and the *Golden Ship*. This is a Mastertronic adventure, going back to 1985 — the clues in my file, are dated January 1986! Perhaps something is going on that no one has told me about!

And all at once, inroads are being made on *Trinity*, but not at home! *Rainer Fuchs* and *Stephen Enghout* are the first two readers who have written to say they have completed this Infocom epic — and both are from West Germany.



"I desperately need some help with this completely mad, but brilliant adventure," writes Simon Percival of Colchester. A troll is blocking Simon's

path in *Colour Of Magic*, and every time he tries to do something, he gets knocked off his horse. "Can you also tell me what I am supposed to do when the gods are playing a board game?" he adds.

The only funhouse I have ever heard of, is Scott Adams' *Mystery Funhouse*. But A. Cooke of Cardiff has managed to get himself stuck in another funhouse. This one is from Pacific Software, and dated 1984. Is there anyone else out there who has played it and can help?

What Mr Cooke is looking for is the second part of the *Golden Mask* — he found the first part in a tank of water. In his search, he has killed two of the Gromuts, but is unable to pass the one at the south of the gate near the big dipper.



Mike Thomas (oh no, not him AGAIN?) has moved his wardrobe, and discovered a flight of stone steps leading downwards. But he can't get much further without getting killed by three of *Dracula*'s female vampires. Now there's a problem to get your teeth into!

A couple of BBC golden oldies are plaguing Martin Dennett of Sutton Coldfield. He can't answer the riddle at the end of *Kingdom of Hamlet*, nor can he understand the banking system in *Quoniam*.

Another oldie is causing Adrian Smith of Cambridge some distress. Not quite so old or so golden as those BBC games is *Inferno*, where Martin has reached inner hell, but Titan blocks his escape. Typing HELP reveals he needs Virgil's help — but is there a special command required to get it?

Aage Christoffer sen ol

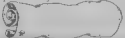
Gentofte in Denmark, does not know what to do to the hot furnace or the fire demouir *Causes of Chaos*. He's also playing another adventure. "OK, so *Time Search* is a bad game," says Aage, but by giving it a chance, he found he almost liked this Duckworth adventure. However, he now needs to pass a guard, and knows he must bribe him. Seems the guard won't co-operate, for he won't accept the gold coin Aage keeps offering him. What is really worrying, though, is a hamburger that is listed as an object. Neither 'burger' nor 'hamburger' are understood by the program. Is this a bug that is preventing Aage from completing the game?

And finally, there's Stuart Walker, of Widnes, trying to kill the Roe, in *Sinbad and the Golden Ship*.

If you are suffering from an Adventure, then don't forget to drop us a line. We will get back to you with a good tip if possible, but come what may, we WILL get back to you! and of course, we'll be delighted if you can help us to help other desperate adventurers!

There's Paul Coppins, professional adventure-tester and inveterate bacon sandwich eater; Steve Donoghue, horse problems a speciality; Matthew Woodley, a highly successful adventure player with cash to prove it, plus Daniel Gilbert and Adrian Bott, who only play to win.

Here's an unsolicited testimonial from Joanne Tucker of Croydon. "Thanks! You're the best. I buy both Zaap and C+VG, but you're slightly better, since you care, and answer your adventures." Only SLIGHTLY better? Shame on you, Joanne!! Service to our readers is the most important part of our job!



Guy Thomas of Whitstable is

not so sure that *The Pawn* is the best adventure ever, as many people claim. Some of the puzzles are very nearly illogical, says Guy, and the ending is a dreadful disappointment after all the hard work.

Guy takes me to task for suggesting that the parser is better than that of Infocom. Whilst the vocabulary may be larger, he says, the friendliness and complexity of the parser understanding definitely isn't.

The two parsers are definitely different, and each tends to be a bit specialist at its own thing. But overall, I find that the Scrolis parser does more for me. Infocom adventures often come up with some very dense answers to relatively simple commands after an agonising pause.

Of course, this varies depending upon which machine you are playing on, and I am referring to the Commodore 64 versions, bearing in mind that Infocom games do not have graphics to tetch and display. Sometimes, too, the stringing together of commands results in not even the first of the string being recognised, even though perfectly acceptable on its own.

Guy's well-reasoned criticisms of my views on these matters, and his distress over my *Bard's Tale* review, earn



him a coveted C+VG T-shirt. Which just goes to show — we don't only reward 'yes' men in this magazine! We like to be kept on our toes!

Not everyone, of course has access to a disk drive, and those of us that do tend automatically to rate disk adventures more highly than almost any tape-only adventure. Not so with Gregory Quin, himself an avid Infocom player. *Dracula*,

PROBLEMS? THEN WRITE TO KEITH CAMPBELL, COMPUTER & VIDEO GAMES, ADVENTURE HELPLINE

ADVENTURE CLUES

a humble Quilled three-partlet on tape, is the best adventure Gregory has played in ages.

"I just love the long atmospheric descriptions, they're just like reading a book," says Gregory, adding, "I hope Rod Pike produces some more brilliant games like this."

I'm sure he will, Gregory and I look forward to them too. But it just goes to show that quality is in the plot and implementation, whatever the medium used. Disk will only make possible what can't be done on tape—it isn't a magic formula for success.



The Pawn was responsible for what Carl Young of Nottingham described as a 'rather annoying incident' recently. The game asked him to type in a word from the book (part of the game's security system) and requested page 17, line six, word eight. Carl looked up the word, entered it—and it didn't work. "I found the answer after much arsing about, and completely by luck," says Carl. If you get stuck, then try page 17, line eight, word nine, suggests Carl! A T-shirt flies in his general direction for this tip.

Meanwhile, the game-play problems are gathering momentum in the *Helpline* mail. Two recent letters from West Germany, showed Reiner Wald of Bonn trying hard to rescue the princess, and to get her safely down the stairs, but to no avail. Why do people always want to rescue princesses, I wonder?

Tim Sattelkau of Leedenscheid, on the other hand, is bemoaning the fact that he can either vote and gain 40 points with no other apparent advantage in the game. Or he can rescue the princess instead, but for no points. Oh ho! And what is the prism for? he asks.

WITCH'S CALDRON:
Wear the witch's hat before going into the room with the dead man, to get the spoon

WOODBURY END:
The beast can be found east of the grille.

TRINITY:
A spade is needed to open the crypt. Drop the scycle to get Squeeze the skank to death! the hump.

VALKARIE 17:
A good shake will bring a treasure toppling!

COLOUR OF MAGIC:
Say the magic number at the altar, and throw the crystal at Bel Shannoroith

SEABASE DELTA:
To get on the ice-saw, walk the plank!

DRACULA
There're blankets under the seat in the coach

THE HELM:
Eight, in fact
Many hands make light work.

FANTASTIC FOUR:
For a soft landing, move near the bottom!

IMAGINATION:
Heat a cold treat, to gain a toy
Heat to hastes melting, will fuel a cold treat.



William Herg of Aberdeen, has discovered some bugs in the Atari ST version of some Infocom games. Are they present in all versions, he wonders?

In *Wishbringer*, after buying the ticket from Miss Voss, you can pick up the gold coin. Thus you can keep buying tickets, and increase your score continually!

In *Zork 2*, William discovered that if you die after having killed the dragon, both yourself and the dragon are reincarnated. Although transparent, the dragon will follow you around, and will melt the ice again, which it thinks is still there too!

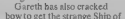


Richard Brock of Hemel Hempstead has really been feeling the cold this winter. It's when he gets out of *Dracula's*

coach that it hits him. Who can help warm him up?

Paul Stapley, meanwhile, has been both playing the game and not playing the game. Sounds like something out of *Fitch Ficker*? It's true! Despite having discovered a most complex method of cheating Quilled games in such a way that he can get to any location, he cannot get into the mansion in *Dracula Part Three*.

Lost in the forest, and in search of the *Carfax Estate*, is Paul Wilkins of Leytonstone, whilst Lewis McNiece of Carrickfergus, has found the place, and trying unsuccessfully, to enter it!



No you can't, says Gareth Williams of Swansea. The crack in *Twin Kingdom Valley* is a red herring! and only appears in the C64 version of the game.

Gareth has also cracked bow to get the strange Ship of

Doom mentioned by Malcolin Harden some time back. It appears as a message when you do something naughty to the female android, suggests Gareth. "After that, try paying her!" adds Gareth.



Here's an offer Zorkers can't refuse! Anyone wanting a complete map of *Zork 1* or *Zork 2*, can take advantage of a kind offer by Dave Owens. Enclose a large stamped addressed envelope, and write to Dave at: 83 College Road, Trowbridge, Wilts BA14 8N2.

And some adventure support for TI owners, and B. Anderson of High Wycombe in particular, comes from Kirsty Clift. Kirsty suggests contacting the 'International TI User Group' run by Peter Brooks, 96 Banbury Road, Oxford OX2 6JT (tel: Oxford 510822). The group's magazine has an adventure helpline, and will give advice on software availability.

of Thieves

taken by boat to a jetty, and dropped off, being told to ransack the local castle, by way of a test assignment.

You must return with all the booty! Fully kitted out for the task, you find yourself dropped by boat at the jetty, wearing jeans, striped sweatshirt, and carrying a swag bag.

The master of the castle is hiding a dark secret, whilst his gatekeeper is running a little betting business on the side.

If he likes the look of your face, he may even invite you to have a flutter, so it will pay not to be penniless when the time comes!

But not all the action takes place in the castle. The surrounding countryside makes for a pleasant stroll, through the golden fields of wheat, and perhaps a leisurely chat with the friendly miller. Ooops! Watch that step on the way out!

Scrub, copses, and a river give way to a hill, itself the entrance to (the inevitable) complex of caves. Here you may visit the zoological gardens (if you have the cash), and try talking to a mynah bird, or perhaps get wrapped up in an encounter with a bon-constructor.

Not far away is the local cemetery, with a somewhat cereal grave. This is where you

will come across what I reckon to be the finest picture in the whole game.

Working by night, a lamp on the ground nearby is a gravedigger intent on his task, seen through the half-open iron gates of the cemetery. The lighting and colour gradation of this picture are nothing short of amazing.

Further south is a mysterious temple. If you are into frescos, you will no doubt recognise some famous ones decorating its walls.

On the other hand, if you are into coloured squares, you might eventually discover some satanic secrets in the temple's deeper recesses.

The puzzles themselves are not quite so sequential, and are less devious than those in Pawn, so that, to a greater extent, it is possible to concentrate on one at a time, and then come back in a replay to follow up another one.

There is quite a range of difficulty, but even the ones that seem impossible at the start don't come too hard once you've got the feel of the game.

If you can't make all the connections, don't worry — there's a wealth of clues scattered around the game, so make sure you read all the magazines, books, and pamphlets that you come across!

Here is a huge adventure, with seemingly endless variety. There's plenty of scope for sport including

fishing, ski-ing, billiards, bunting, or just plain gambling, if you are among the less active.

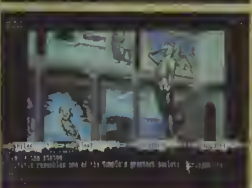
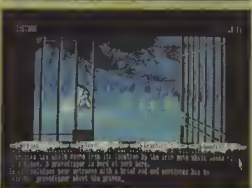
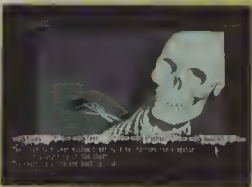
For the more daring, there's plenty of danger, too! How'd you fancy a walk across red-hot coals? A tussle with a grizzly bear? Or a trip through a rat-infested room?

Naturally, I've got hooked, and can't wait until my very

pre-production copy has been exchanged for a final version, in which the endgame will be fully implemented. THEN perhaps I'll discover what that prehistoric bird is doing flying overhead halfway through the game!

Guild of Thieves will be available very soon after you read this. Don't hesitate to go out and buy a copy as soon as it's around!

Guild holds such a wealth of puzzles and surprises, it will make even the best budget adventures look expensive in terms of what you get for your money!



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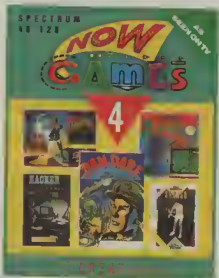
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ADVENTURE



3 REVIEWS

Hildegarde were not blessed with children, but and as kids, spent you and your cousins many happy holidays at their superb seaside mansion. She died some years ago now, following the recent death of Hildegarde, you are doing the reading of her

days when Aunt Hildegard warned you about going in there without a map!

At this point the game becomes infuriating, but what are adventures about if not the satisfaction gained from finding you are clever enough to solve logical problems? So there must be a way in, and the means is staring you in the face right from the start. When there's nothing left to do, you

thought in the parser and vocabulary, for Infocom's is now beginning to look a little old in the tooth, when compared with that of Magnetic Scrolls.

A visit to the bedroom you used to sleep in on your hole, reminds you of the time when you slept in the bottom bunk, and cousin Herman got sick in the top bunk. . . You got your own back later by sticking honey up his nose, and was soon in trouble for being out of bed with a cold. That is just one small example of the depth of the background theme that runs throughout the game.

An excellent adventure with some difficult but very rewarding puzzles.

- VOCABULARY
- ATMOSPHERE
- PERSONAL
- VALUE



► SUPPLIER: INFOCOM/
ACTIVISION
► MACHINE: C64; SPECTRUM
► PRICE: VARIES
► REVIEWER: KEITH
CAMPBELL

This is one of Infocom's best, written by new author 'Hollywood' Dave Anderson, who in 1983 joined Infocom as a tester, and after progressing to manager of testing, became a game writer in 1985.

Your Uncle Buddy Burbank was a Hollywood big shot in his time. He and his wife

HOLLYWOOD HI-JINX

Imagine your amazement when you hear they are leaving their entire estate to you, their favourite nephew! But there is one snag — you must spend a night in the mansion and its grounds and find ten treasures hidden on the premises by morning.

On your arrival, you head to the porch, full of anticipation — and find the door is locked.

But wait, there's a back door, just by the patio. It just couldn't be that easy though, could it? Of course, that door too, is locked. There's not an awful lot more you can do, unless you fancy chancing your arm in the hedge maze — and how well you remember the

will turn to it, and, perhaps, it
will turn to you! As a puzzle —
sheer poetry!

This is a house full of traps and surprises, and just to make you feel uneasy, the sound of nearby footsteps is sometimes heard . . . Something heavy falls to the floor upstairs . . . Are you being manipulated? Or is one of your other cousins prowling, trying to prevent you from getting the treasure? There is plenty of food for thought in many of the puzzles in HFDJ, meaning that they are the sort you can chew over, and come up with a number of angles of attack.



V M
 V M
 V I
 V R

THE SERPENT'S TALE

- ▶ 4
- ▶ 5
- ▶ 6
- ▶ 7



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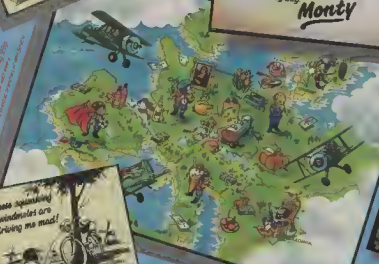


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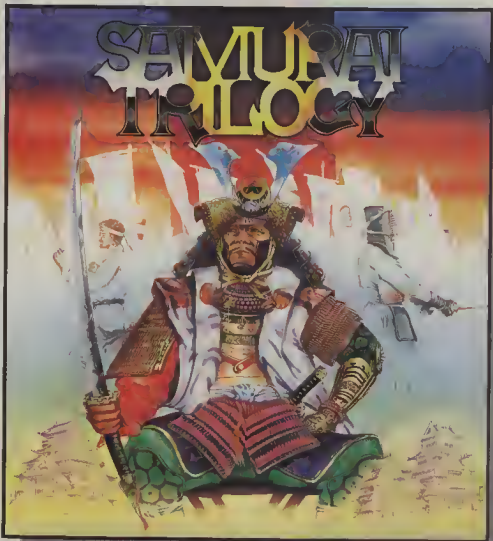
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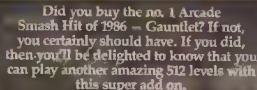
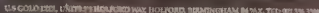


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No, no! We're not talking about the trendy furniture store! This *Habitat* is the latest and possibly greatest online interactive adventure in the world. It harnesses the power of the C64 to put YOU in the centre of the action. Our Stateside newshound Marshal M. Rosenthal tells you all about the adventure and the Quantumlink system which enables you to access the wonderful world of *Habitat*!

Who designed and created *Habitat*? Responsible for developing this on-line-the-electronic-dimension is Chip Morningstar. We can never know what preparations God might have made, but Morningstar's three years of Lucasfilm's Game Division were preceded by image processing research, and software/language design for instruments to be placed on orbital satellites.

Morningstar was working feverishly one rainy evening trying to complete a bit of code before calling it a night.

A lightning bolt struck the building and shorted out every arched circuit, including his terminal, just as he was in the midst of compiling a program for customizing *Avatars*.

The ensuing electrical maelstrom disintegrated his physical body, and left him trapped within the code.

Lucasfilm personnel discovered this the next morning when they located the work disk to find a familiar-looking figure rolling around with his feet on the furnimre.

Morningstar was subsequently moved into *Habitat*, where he now resides.

C-VG: American contributing editor, Marshal M. Rosenthal, is on stranger to the unexpected. But even he found it a bit unusual to receive a game designer (in a package marked URGENT/DO NOT X-RAY) Rosenthal located Morningstar up in a Commodore 64 for the following exclusive interview.

C-VG: Now does it feel to be a part of *Habitat*?

CM: It's different, but who's complaining? Before this happened, members of the Games Division used to sit around having an evening debate an artificial intelligence. We

wanted to create an automation. A thinking, feeling being to appear in software. The Quantumlink network opens up an avenue for our creating a unique world of other egos that can parallel human experiences. This is really an exciting prospect.

C-VG: What have you discovered about your new home?

CM: Quite a lot. But first off it's called a Turf. I discovered that no one here eats or drinks, although you can still go to bars and hang out. Artifacts are strewn throughout, and you can purchase unusual devices and search for strange and mystical things. But anybody's remote areed in ski-masks pulling *Friday* the 13th stuff. That doesn't mean that everybody is nice, but the general attitude is far fun and adventure rather than mayhem. Besides, the Oracle provides everyone with a fat bank account and it's real easy to live off the interest. Just go to a dispenser and get some tokens.

C-VG: Can't such a life get boring? CM: No way! Remember, this is interactive. Everything is constantly in motion whether you're a part of it or not. You may return to *Habitat* after a few days to find all sorts of changes. And of course there are the other *Avatars* popping in and out of your electronic life. There's unknown territory to discover, adventures to participate in, even social interactions like games and politics if you want. Puzzles are everywhere, and you have to learn the different rules and regulations of this world the hard way — by experience.

C-VG: Now do you do things as an *Avatar*?

CM: Simple. A joystick moves you around, and there are a selection

mouse that appear everywhere when you want to go somewhere or do something. The keyboard takes care of the rest. Talking in word balloons does take a lot of getting used to though. Still, it's good enough for Popeye. . .

C-VG: Did you have to create everything from scratch?

CM: Fortunately, no. We could build on some existing software tools, and adapt them to work in whole new ways. Take the shops of the *Avatars* for example. They may seem to be of the same stuff as the characters used in our Labyrinth game, but there are entirely different techniques occurring.

C-VG: So just what is going on? CM: To start, every single thing that happens is linked through the Most computer, and then into other players from all over. This kind of processing takes a lot of power, and so we're using a STRATUS non-stop super minicomputer. This baby is actually a number of processors hooked together. Eight are online right now, and more can be added as the need arises.

Consider just what is going on: colour graphics, sound, disc input/output, keyboard and joystick commands. All operating at the same time. You'd almost expect the disk drive to explode and the C64 to roll over on its back and die!

C-VG: Now does the software tie in with the STRATUS?

CM: Well, first the program is loaded after entering the gaming section of Quantumlink. Then you pick the disk containing object data. The C64 is then controlled by three things: what your *Avatar* is doing, what other *Avatar*'s are doing, and what the Master Program thinks about the whole business. Think of the data as being blocks that can be formed into just about anything.

Each location (town, forest, dragon, etc.) is called a region, and I've been able to cause over a thousand of them right now. There's a lot more on the way too. Some really awesome stuff.

C-VG: Any comments on how this is affecting your social life?

CM: I've no complaints. My Turf is swell, and I can change the furniture, colours or patterns in a flash. It's great.

Telecommunication services allow people from all over the world to call in using their computer and a phone modem. Unlike other telecom services, Quantumlink is designed for use only with the Commodore 64/128 computers, and even provides the software free with a purchase of the machine.

Q-link performs a full range of text and information services, but because it is designed for the exclusive use of C64ers it can take advantage of the computer's graphic and sound capabilities. None of that generic stuff, with games represented by numbers and bits of graphics tossed together from letters. Here you'll find the same type of graphics as you can access from a disk.

The software handles everything. Auto-dial modems can be triggered into action and the software will do the rest, even taking care of giving the correct password and name.

Users select topics by pairing to options displayed on the screen. What could be simpler? There's even an online Commodore Information Network, with helpful advisors always available to chat with.

Things to do include the People Connection (where special interest groups can be found), a learning center containing educational materials, and news and weather reports.

Plus lots of games, where you can play against the master computer or another person. You can even sample new software provided by various companies.

Possibly the best news is the price. Quantumlink gives unlimited base service for only \$3.95 a month, and that's for 24 hours a day on weekends, and 6PM to 7AM weekdays. Premium services, like *Habitat*, cost an additional six cents a minute.

Quantum Computer Services Inc.
8620 Westwood Center Drive,
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Continued from Page 79

being able to twitch him in whenever you want. I've also heard that those who enter *Habitat* the normal way can even choose their gender. Making friends is as easy as going out the door, and you can later contact them directly with ESP. There's even a mail service and regular newspaper. Maybe I should place a classified and see if there are any others who got sapped here like I did.

C-VG: How many Avatars are out there anyway?

CM: Okay. Truth is—who can count that high? I did limit it to six in one region at a time, because more than that makes me claustrophobic. That's all you can fit in a but uh anyway, and that's one place I wasn't going to leave out. But I did and a ghost feature to let animated numbers at Avatars congregate together, although the full-bodied ones are warmed by a little icon that someone is watching and listening in. Imagine the fun of performing on stage with hundreds or thousands of invisible spectators. What an ego trip! And so food means so critics pelting you with tomatoes.

C-VG: So you're happy in *Habitat*?
CM: Yes but. My friends come so often and visit me, and I look forward to seeing the world evolve as Avatars interact with each other. I do miss the northern California weather though, so perhaps I'll add a tanning salon. There's so much to what can happen, it's gonna be fun.



Yes, I am the all-powerful Oracle. I have consented to show you around *HABITAT*, so pay attention. Usually I do not bother to make myself known directly. Imagine how much time it

takes to be answering everyone's questions about every little thing. That's why I usually respond by mail.

Here we see two Avatars, for such they are called. The fountain at the city of Populopolis is one place where I manifest myself, but I wish she would turn down the music. I also like the shopping at Budop Drive, and the Skid Row area, although it tends to get a lot less civilized there.



This is Valentino, and there is his home, or turf so I have decreed it. Looks like he's gotten some mail.



So Swellbro is no longer mad at him, eh?



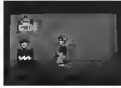
Let's peek in on her. Hmm, guess she's getting tired of playing checkers and wants to see him so she can make for another adventure.



I wouldn't have credited Valentino with so much sense. He's checking the weekly newspaper, the *RANT*, to see if there's any mention of what Swellbro's been up to.



He's still going to meet her though.



At least he's smart enough to use a teleport.



There's Swellbro, and she looks like she's in another one of her ogre-like moods.



Let's leave Valentino to hear the brunt of her bad humor, and look in on one arrival to *Habitat*. His name is Kusena, and he's in the process of choosing a lead to reflect his personality.



Sometimes I think I put this in so I could watch Avatars running around like chickens with their heads cut off.



Well, he managed that all right. There he does cut the door.



Yah, I thought he was heading for the bar.



He sure got into networking quick. Probably a seller in the other world. He'll be time for a while.



Let's see how Savelire and Valentine are making out. He's following her lead so always.



Looks like she's found something.



She better be careful with that crystal ball. Oh so! She's telling Valentine to get lost and wishing that she was somewhere else.



Well, the get her wish. I don't think we should watch, it's going to get a bit painful.



I see a couple of Avatars hanging out around one of the book token dispensers. Sometimes I wish I hadn't given everyone millionaire status, but at least it keeps them from spending all their time doing boring things like getting jobs and working.



For shame! Who made that rude noise?



Apparently, Pratt thought Pigface responsible. Interesting that all he did was bounce him a bit.



Can't fault Savelire for trying. She's made it through the forbidden woods and isn't daunted by the mysterious dungeons. That's one tough Avatar!



Well, so much for her good luck. Say goodbye to the crystal ball, Miss S. At least the devil has a sense of humour.



Let's leave them to sort things out.



There he goes again, frittering away tokens on vending machine stuff.



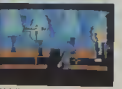
So the devil let Savelire go? Doesn't look like her mood has improved by the faviour.



You hear she can't just turn into a pleasant forest scene like I can when there's a limit for tranquility.



And there's Marmale changing her Turl again. She's never satisfied.



I think that you've seen enough. I have to follow along with Carnipet and Simalay, but it's time for you to return home.



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By god siri These Binary Vision chapples are a bit clever. Not satisfied with the success of *The Fourth Protocol* and *Zoids*, they've come up with an absolutely spiffing new adventure called *Stiffflip*. What or who is *Stiffflip*?

Well, if you're a fan of those ancient black and white Fu Manchu movies, old detective films or even managed to catch the brilliant *Dad Savage*, *Man of Bronze* on TV the other month you'll get an idea. *Stiffflip* is a combination of all the best-and-worse things about 30s thrillers, written or otherwise. It's full of larger than life characters — heroes and villains.

Old movies have inspired Rupert Bawter and Paul Norris to create this fun can driven adventure.

Stiffflip also uses the exciting windowing techniques seen in *Zoids* — but the whole game is much easier to get to grips with. As you can see from our screen shots the

control icons are ranged down the left hand side of the screen while the main picture is a cartoon style representation of the location occupied by the character you currently control.

But enough of all this technical stuff. Let's take a gander at the plot.

Stiffflip

A new game from Palace! It's enough to make your hair stand an end. After all new things from the people who brought you *Couldron* and *Sacred Armour* promise to be really ace. C+VG took an early look of this surefire chart hit and can now bring you this up to the minute report from the Palace throne room!

For countless years British schools have conducted a gruelling regime. Cold baths, corporal punishment and over-cooked cabbage.

Whenever possible the British leave their soggy island for good, hence their pre-eminence as a seafaring nation. Far from

home they yearn for the sound of willow against leather.

But their contempt for foreign languages has forced them to colonise other countries as the only way of persuading them to take up the game.

Now disaster looms for the bawler and brolly

brigade. The contemptible count Chameleon, master of disguise and sworn enemy of the establishment, is determined to succeed in his latest and greatest dastardly plot.

His sale of rubber goods, through mail-order ads in a civil service magazine, has led him to develop the Rubbertronic Ray.

With it he threatens to neutralise the starch in wing-collars, loosen stiff upper lips and generally relax moral standards — leading to the collapse of the Empire.

Worse still, it will radically and unpredictably alter the bounce of a cricket ball. This boulder must be stopped!

That's where Viscount Sebastian Stiffip and his team of intrapid adventurers come in. They set off to the banana republic of Bonanaria to find the dastardly count Chameleon and put a stop to his evil plans!

The story unfolds on screen in a series of cartoon strip like panels. You can see two at a time so you've always know just what you did to get yourself into such BIG trouble the move before.

You can talk to people, or fight them, and generally have a spiffing time. As long as you remember the British public school code — Pay Up and Play the Game!

If you try to many dirty tricks — these are allowed — you might find yourself batting on a sticky wicket.

As you move through the game the cartoon "pages" peel off to reveal new locations. A nifty gimmick this!

All this plus the Binary Vision windows which make the game so slick to look at and easy to play.

We can't wait to get our hands on a finished game — and we're betting that you'll feel the same way.

So brush up your safari suit, look out that MCC tie you've got lurking in the back of the wardrobe and prepare to keep a stiff upper lip, play with a straight bat and all that True Brit stuff.

Viscount Sebastian Stiffip

Englishman, eccentric and explorer — a comic hero in every sense. Though Captain of Cricket at school, Sebastian grew up in the shadow of his cousin Sylvester Stiffishirt, who trad on a mine in World War 1, ensuring three corners of a foreign field that are forever England. Always proud of his modesty, flying ace in the

Professor Broindeath

Was declared clinically dead over a decade before the start of our adventure. Fortunately he has kept going thanks to his "Sonne und windholter" — a solar powered bow-tie which can act as a windmill during periods of extended darkness. Keen to visit the tropics on account of "all that sun". Worked for many years on a device to put the middle back into

Calanel Bargie (G.N.T. and bar)

Of unknown wartime experience. Tall and dashing; blue blooded, yellow-bellied, red-eyed and green-fingered and known to his friends as "RGB" on account of his colourful personality. Joined our adventure to avoid bad tempered travellers at home and not a bit persuaded by talk of South American riches. Pet hates: hates pets (especially creepy crawlies). Breeds clay pigeons.

Miss Palmyra Primbottom

Youngest ever troop leader in the Girl Guides and first winner of the badge for deportment. Has travelled the world collecting rare skin disorders and is the authoress of "The Young Lady's Companion to Tropical Exploration". Member of the Women's Temperance League for Clothing the Savages.

The Contemplable Count Chameleon

Started young by attempting to blow up his school and was severely reprimanded for stoudering behind the bicycle sheds. Expelled for over-bidding at Bridge, since when he has borne a grudge against the Establishment. Founder of the Guide-dogs for the Deaf Association, and last seen by the captain of the Titanic disguised as an Iceberg. A bad egg turned rotten — a man who can curdle yoghurt at twenty paces. He'd steal candy from a baby, he'd sell his own grandmother, he'd even say "ho-o" to a goose. His villainy knows no bounds...



On the left hand side of the screen shot are six icons which Binary Vision call Icon and Bubble control.

The first of these icons is a Chinwag, the second is the Fishcuffs icon, the third is Beetle off, the fourth is Do One's Stuff, the fifth is Slate of Play and the sixth is Change Batter.

On the right hand side of the screen shot you will see these icons showing three different characters. The top character who has the eyepatch is Calanel R. G. Bargie, the second is Professor Broindeath and the third is Miss Palmyra Primbottom.

In the middle of the screen shot there are two illustrations, the top represents the immediate past and the bottom the present.

In both sections, the Viscount Sebastian Stiffip himself is depicted. The character he is standing next to in the top illustration is fairly unpleasant.

The fact that he is next to the character in the immediate past means one of two things. Either he moved away very quickly by selecting the Beetle-off icon, or Stiffip beat him in a fight. If Stiffip were to talk to this character, the sort of thing he would say would be "Now look here my good man", whereupon Stiffip would be attacked.

In the bottom illustration Stiffip is seen with a barmen. If Stiffip were to talk to this character he would be likely to say something on the lines of "Nice bar you have here."

Great War, feared by his friends and loved by his foes and known by all as "The Yellow Viscount". After four years of tea at five o'clock, bonfires at 6 o'clock and bed at 7.30, our have-a-go hero was promoted to inactive duty on the Stiffip estate in darkest Surrey. Favourite colours: red, white, blue,

dauphnuts, and went on to apply the same technology to toilet seats until the bottom fell out of the market — has since become one of our backroom boys. Founder of the ACME corporation, Prof. Broindeath is living (?) proof that not all mad professors are bad professors.



Rupert Bowater and Paul Morris keep a stiff upper lip in an abandoned lug shelter.

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1. *Journal of Management Studies*, 1996, 33, 1, 1-14.

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► FLYING SHARK

The odds against you in Taito's *Flying Shark* are horrendous. Imagine one little bi-plane against the full and well-equipped forces of an invading enemy. Though that's the beauty of arcade games — everything goes and you'll never notice the resemblance to 1942 — the game is played on much the same lines.

At first I found *Flying Shark* difficult to get into. Not because it was tricky to learn — control is very simple — but because I spent far too much time chasing enemy fighters and not enough time dodging their bullets.

Consequently, each game ended almost before I'd got started!

You soon get the hang of it though. Just make sure you keep more than half an eye on the enemy bullets which whizz over all corners of the screen, and try to take out five tanks and anti-aircraft guns before they can do too much damage. At the same time you're under attack from squadrons of enemy fighters, so your work's cut out from the word go.

It's just as well you're provided with shatter bombs. These act like smart bombs, destroying everything within a large radius, but use them sparingly as you have only three to start with. Under more normal circumstances you'll

have to make do with a steady stream of bullets, though, fortunately, the supply seems endless.

The attacking squadrons are colour coded and if you manage to shoot down the lot, you're awarded bonuses. An 'S' symbol appears when the red squadron goes down in flames and this doubles your life points.

Annihilation of the blue squadron gives you an extra plane, and a 'B' symbol occasionally appears giving an extra shatter bomb.

You can fly all over the screen, but it's best to keep to the bottom half, that way you've got more time to gun down the enemy fighters before they're on top of you.

The graphics are great — highly coloured and very detailed. I was especially impressed with the *Flying Shark*, it tips its wings realistically when banking from left to right and its ground shadow follows faithfully, growing smaller the higher you climb. And when

you hit an enemy plane, it catches fire, then dives into the ground. It's growing shadow makes the effect even more realistic. Further levels take you over an estuary where there's a nice mix of tanks, gun ships and fighter squadrons, and then you find yourself over the sea. And it's of that point you realise how puny some of the enemy

units were in fact. You brought to deal with menaces battle cruises kitted out with anti-aircraft guns. Again, Taito has come up with the goods.



► PSYCHO SOLDIER

Psycho Soldier conjures up visions of an eight foot psychopath rushing round Rambo style, gunning down everything that moves. Imagine the shock when you're in action with a cute little girl, called Mimi, some of whom is mini-kicker.

The game is from SINK in Japan and I imagine the title has suffered in its translation into English.

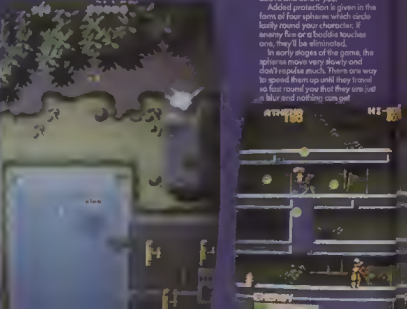
However cute, *Psycho Soldier* is no walkover. It can be played either as a one or two player game, girl and boy in tandem against the forces of evil. Their mission is to "find peace for tomorrow's people".

You get super-fast action, masses of artistically drawn attacking aliens and lots of zapping. You can't let up for a minute. Obviously, playing with both characters, the pace is faster, and anyway it's twice fun to plan your tactics and blast in unison.

The screen is divided into four levels, so you can hop from level to level to escape sticky situations or hunt out the baddies patrolling above and below you.

Added protection is given in the form of four spheres which circle lazily round your character. If enemy fire or a baddie touches one, they'll be eliminated.

In early stages of the game, the spheres move very slowly and don't repulse much. There are ways to speed them up until they travel so fast round you that they are just a blur and nothing can get





through.

Energy columns appear randomly — just dive through one and the spheres speed up a notch. If you manage to do this a number of times you'll be rewarded by a fast spinning, totally protective ring around your character.

The idea is to keep four revolving spheres at all times, and when one is damaged or disappears, make haste to collect another to complete the circle.

You can also add to your weapons by collecting swords and the like giving an additional edge over the aliens when involved in a spot of close combat.

Often you'll find the area swarming with nasties and by the time you've killed or escaped from them, it's too late to go back and collect the sword. Very frustrating.

There are various stages in the game, each getting harder to complete than the last. On the early levels it's just a matter of dodging and killing the baddies, running over crystals and balloons for bonus points and trying to make it in time to the next column.

The aliens are numerous — men wearing tribes stamp down the passageways, flying fish and bees charge at head height and innocent looking eggs hatch to release clutches of deadly green baby aliens. In fact, the first time I saw an egg, I shot at it believing it would offer a bonus as some sort and was instantly overcome by horrible little monsters which look just like the ones found in the film *Alien*. Yuck!

Psycho Soldier is a simple game which I enjoyed tremendously.



► RASTAN SAGA

The coin-op of the month has GOT to be Talia's superb *Rastan Saga* — a bottle of wits and cunning with a huge Conanesque character as the hero.

The idea is to bring back the head of the dreaded Dragon to the Princess of Siam — the Dragon is an evil creature by all accounts — in exchange for all the treasures of the empire. So, with the thought of all that lovely loot as prize money, let's get going!

Armed only with a sword, you're instantly set upon by bands of club-wielding aliens. Easy pickings as your sword snakes in and out, slashing and stabbing, until they fall like ninetails. That early screen as a card but at least it gives you a chance to learn some degree of sword control.

Underground passages soon appear, some with concealed entrances, in these you may find extra weapons. Other passages contain ambushes and a host of bloodthirsty fighters — avoid these if you can.

On you stomp, slopping only to stop at vampire bats, centaurs and other mutant man/slaves. Some of these leave behind jewels which

must be picked up for bonus points.

For the most part, you can get rid of the aliens fairly easily. If necessary, forget about your sword and jump over them, hopefully to leave them far behind.

Cliff walls are soon reached and these you can shin up using the ropes which dangle for just that purpose. Rivers must be negotiated by hopping from rock to rock, and chasms must be crossed by swinging on ropes, Tarzan-style. Most of the hazards require careful timing in order to cross unscathed.

You have three lives, they are lost when the stamina grid reaches zero. Even if the enemy does manage to get the better of you in a fight, you won't die instantly if your stamina rating is high.

There are objects you can pick up to reduce the damage from enemy attacks. The Mantel reduces enemy damage by 50 per cent, the Shield also affords some protection, and the Axe, Hammer and Fire Sword increase your fire power and to your fighting skills.

The Fire Sword, for instance, shoots flaming bolts at the aliens so you can stand at a safe distance to kill them.

The bad news is that it's difficult to collect the weapons! They are often placed in highly inaccessible spots and it takes several tries to

work out the best way to collect them.

On the version I played, there were no instructions and it took about a dozen abortive attempts before I realised that you have to stab the weapon with your sword to pick it up.

Pretty tricky when you're dropping to the ground from a great height and the weapon has to be stabbed as you fall past it. There are six levels in all, each with three separate scenes, containing a fantastic number of hazards and aliens, and some wonderful graphics which are brilliantly drawn and very realistic.

Rastan Saga is fast paced and the action doesn't let up for a minute. Highly addictive and very playable, the game has got all the ingredients to make it a winner.

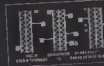


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ARCADE ATTACK

● Kick and Run



At the recent AOU coin-op expo held in Japan, a number of new games were on show, which should be filtering through to the UK over the

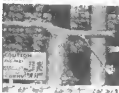
next few months.

We've already had a look at Psycho Soldier, Rastan, Sogo, Flying Shark and Exerizer but here's news of a few others.

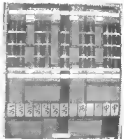
● Two new football games, which we'll be looking at in greater detail next month are Taito's **Kick and Run** and Universal's **American Soccer**. Though Taito's game is English soccer and Universal's is the American version, I'm putting my money on **Kick and Run** which is a far more detailed and exciting game to play.

● **Copcom** has two new games out — **Top Secret**, and **Bionic Commandos**, don't know anything about **Top Secret** but **Bionic Commandos** looks lot of fun. You are part of a special commando unit out to thwart the baddies, and to help in your task you've been kitted out with a bionic arm!

This shoots out to grab onto things, like tree branches, allowing you to swing across huge chasms and the like using your arm as a rope. The graphics are cute with lots of colour.



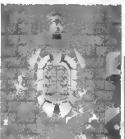
● **Jong Bou** is **SNK's** latest release and is based on **Break Out** and **Arkanoid**. It's one difference is that your platform, and the walls you have to break up, look like the playing pieces from a game of Mah-Jong. Should be interesting.



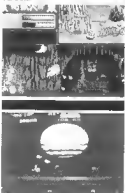
● **Psycho 5** from **Joleco** is a game in which you have to rescue your psychic comrades from detention. There are five characters in the game each with different attributes — one being good at flying, the next good at jumping and so on. Lots of objects to pick up, traps to negotiate and baddies to overcome. It sounds much more fun than **Exerizer**!

● **Kornov** from **Data East** is apparently a little like **Ghosts 'n' Goblins** and **Super Mario Bros**. It's a horizontal scrolling game with you as the hero Kornov — a fatfish balding creature, single handedly fighting off the forces of evil. Sounds like the Ed! (That's enough of that! Ed). Lots of action, ladders to climb up and down, power-ups to collect and bombs to throw.

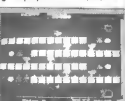
● There are also three other games which look very exciting from the brochures, but as they are written in Japanese I can't even begin to tell you what they're about! Two are from **Deco** and are called **Gondomonia** and **Dragon Princess**.



Gondomonia is a shoot 'em up with lots of additional weapons to collect and the chance to join up with other friendly space craft so that your own model increases in size and power. The third is an unusual looking game from **Namco** with the main playing area taking up the bottom half of the screen, and the scoreboard and an extra playing window taking up the top half of the screen.



● This is **Rygor** the running, jumping martial arts game from **Tamco**. Lots of pretty graphics and huge monsters attack our Kung-Fu hero as he battles for ownership of power shields. Very pretty — but lacking in gameplay? Look out for it.



- 1) OUT RUN
- 2) ROLLING THUNDER
- 3) CHAMPIONSHIP SPRINT
- 4) SIDE ARMS
- 5) AMERICANO
- 6) BUBBLE BOBBLE
- 7) VALTRIC
- 8) NEMESIS
- 9) SOLDIER OF LIGHT
- 10) SHACKLED

SEGA
ATARI
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TAITO
TAITO
KONAMI
TECHNOS
DATA EAST

This list is compiled with the help of one arcade in London's West End, and is not necessarily the case country-wide. Thanks to John Stergides of Electrocoin.

Now, THIS is the game you're all going to be playing this summer. It's called **Solomon's Key** and it's totally and utterly addictive. You won't care what it costs to play, believe us! **Solomon's Key** is an awesome mixture of **Bombjack**, **Pengo**, and **Ghost's 'n' Goblins** and here at C+VG we reckon it's going to be the biggest thing to hit the arcades since **Pac Man**!

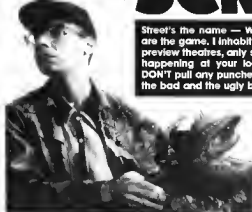
THE BIG SCREEN

Strange facts number one: *Little Shop of Horrors* (PG) began life as a grade-Z horror comedy, made in two days and a night back in 1960. It remained a rarely seen cult movie until somebody had the weird idea of turning it into a stage show and a musical one of those.

Now it's gone full circle and the low budget black and white chiller has become a multi-million dollar all-singing block-buster!

Seymour is a nerd trapped in a dead-end job sweeping up in Mushnik's flower shop. Business is so bad that even the greenery goes elsewhere. But then Seymour discovers an unknown species of plant. He calls it Audrey II, after a curvy colleague who he secretly

Street's the name — Ward R. Street — and films are the game. I inhabit the subterranean world of preview theatres, only surfacing to tell you what's happening at your local picture house. And I DON'T pull any punches. I praise the good — but the bad and the ugly better watch out!



● Horror: "Hi, I'm from Inter-Flara."

admires and who also longs to flee Skid Row. 'It seems to be some sort of a fly trap,' Seymour tells her.

Seymour puts his cute little bloom on display, and soon crowds are flocking in to take a look at this unique specimen. Business booms, but Audrey II is hungry, and flies just aren't

good enough. At first a few drops of human blood are all that's necessary to shake up her stomies, but as she grows bigger, her appetite increases.

Can Seymour resist Audrey II's insatiable demands? Does a biting dentist look like plant food to you? Just where does the this live talking plant actually come from? And will the nerd and the bird ever escape from hell hole that is Downtown, or is the dish somebody else's dinner date?

It's almost impossible to tout!

● Protocol: A bad bedside manner

Little Shop Rick Moranis is brilliant as the wimpish Seymour. Ellen Greene makes a great dumb blonde.

But the ultimate acting honours must be shared between Steve Martin as the dentist with a penchant for giving pain and Audrey II, one of the most brilliant puppet displays ever seen on screen.

● From gardening to DIY: Build a cool bunker, garden shed, an atomic bomb. **The Four Protocol** (15) is just like *Slurp* Peter, only you need more than a Squeeze bottle and make sure mummy helps you with the uranium.

Fourth Protocol shouldn't need any introduction: If you didn't read the best-seller, you probably racked your brain over the computer game. It's lucky old Michael Caine who gets to do it all for real in this cat and mouse tale of international intrigue.

So what is the **Fourth Protocol**? Quite simply, it's an agreement between Russian and America that they won't let off any atomic weapons on each other's territory.

Which is why it's a little naughty of Ruskie agent, Pierce Brosnan, to build a bomb in our backyard — perhaps he was misled or not getting to play James Bond.

But Frederick Forsyth is miles from Ian Fleming, so instead of incessant action and gratuitous gadgetry we get to see the spy as civil servant.

Power struggles in the upper echelons of MI6 result in Caine receiving a rough ride from his superiors, which is a pity be-

cause he's one of their top agents, even if he is given to unorthodox methods.

The tension mounts as Brosnan receives his Aurix atomic weapon kit and Caine battles with red tape as he tries to trace him. It all culminates with some SAS heroics but there's a sting in the tail as well. Just like the game, Forsyth's world of spies is a mixture of deduction and double-cross.

Fourth Protocol is a highly competent thriller, though there are times when it looks like film making by numbers.

● There are one or two realistically nasty moments in **Fourth Protocol**. A surprise then to find that **Trick or Treat** (18) a wholly jakey horror movie is considered more likely to corrupt in the eyes of the censor.

Once more we're in the realm of monsters and music as a dead heavy metal singer comes back from the dead. It's all a big joke at the expense of the moral majority, who insist that Sabbath, Iron Maiden and the rest are the



● Trick or Treat devil's disciples.

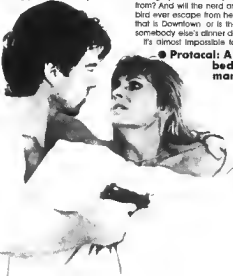
The film makers have gone to the extreme of casting Ozzy Osbourne as a fundamentalist preacher. Bat lovers should stay away!

● Nothing too gory in this one, but there are lots of laughs and some great special effects. The best thing is that the film makers have kept their tongues firmly in their cheeks, and make one or two good comments about hero worship. Apparently Lemmy of Motorhead rates it — and he should know!

● On the same bill are a further five minutes of rock'n'roll mayhem as **More Bad News** takes to the road. It's the **Comic Strip** crew back in top form in a comeback that's even more ghastly than Sammi Curr's.

Every band-on-the-road cliché is jammed into this furious off of gag after gag. There's the reunion meal in the Indian restaurant.

Let's make it a hundred pints of lager while we decide what to





● A Sly grin goes over the top

order, the obligatory game of week-the-hotel-room, and finally *Bad News*'s apathetic — an appearance at Costie Dunnington. Never have so many bottles and beer cans flown through the air in such a short space of time!

One at two of the jokes don't quite make it, but it's still far funnier than a Cliff Richard gig.

● From dumb music to dumb superstars. At least, that's the way the public likes to see Sly Stallone. But we know better, don't we? Inside that muscular body lurks a deep, warm, human being.

Okay, so slap laughing. You can't accept it, and neither could the American public, which has stayed away from *Over the Top* (PG) in droves. Which is a pity, because this everyday tale of a truck-driving arm wrestler is an attempt by our guy Sly to escape *Cobra* image.

Even the arm wrestling is kept in the background until the grand finale, the first part of the film concentrates on Beal's relationship with his son.

The kid has become a spilt upper-class boy ever since dad walked out on the family and rich granddaddy took over.

But now Stallone's mighty parent's ex-wife, who's in hospital about to undergo a major operation, suggests that Sly should collect his son from the military academy and get to know him as he treks across country in his truck.

There are lots of complications on the way and it all culminates in the International Arm Wrestling Championships in that mecca of good taste, Las Vegas.

It's a story in the *Rocky* mould, but with added depth and emotion. There are some genuinely moving scenes between Stallone and young David Mendelhall.

● Another out-of-the-ordinary sport, another Cinderella story of losers becoming winners, but beside *Best Shot* (PG — from May 22nd), *Over the Top* looks like a

masterpiece.

I had really high hopes for this. It's got a great cast including actors like Gene Hackman and Barbara Hershey. Better still, the director is a veteran of the TV classic, *Hill Street Blues*. But



● Shot: "It's my ball and I'm going home."

somewhere along the line something went wrong and instead of tension you get a lot of pretty pictures and a corny tale.

It's 1951 and a new coach arrives in Hickory, Indiana, to teach basketball, which is pretty much a religion in those parts. He takes the team of undisciplined losers and attempts to drill them into a winning

machine, but runs into hick town conservatism at every turn.

The problem is that despite some great acting, the team starts to win too soon, and after that there's no real tension. Even the games are reduced to an endless succession of shots at balls bouncing into baskets. Only go see this one if you love the game.

STAR TREK 4 ★

The plot of *Star Trek IV* — *The Voyage Home* — boldly goes where no screenwriter has gone before. Despite a heavy handed ecological message and a distinctly dodgy storyline, the wrinkly crew of the *Starship Enterprise* manage to make you believe in all the implausible twists and turns of this latest *Trek*ie epic.

Dedicated fans will love the movie, film critics will slam it, and the regular cinema

viewer will enjoy it far the simple entertainment it provides.

To tell you the plot of the film would spoil it. But you can tell you that Admiral James T. Kirk actually does save the Earth and saves himself from a fate worse than death after destroying the *Enterprise* of the back end of *The Search for Spock*.

Star Trek IV isn't heavy on special effects — but it is heavy on humour. Lots more

laughs than the other three films. A great — but obvious — scene on a bus after Kirk and Spock have warped back through time to Earth circa 1987. Spock deals out one of his brain-numbing Vulcan neck massages to an irritating punk with ghetto blasters much to the enjoyment of the other passengers. Wish I could do the same to people with loud Walkmen on the train!

As you'd expect Spock gets all the good lines. After all, Leonard Nimoy did direct the picture. But you can't really escape the feeling that he'd been reading Douglas Adams' *Hitchhiker's Guide* books while working on the film. Just remember the dolphins from the first book and you'll get the idea.

Star Trek IV keeps to the spirit of the TV originals closer than the previous films. Kirk even gets the girl — a long standing feature of the TV plots. Silly but lots of fun. See it.



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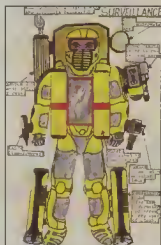
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Back in January we asked you to create your own special Centurion suits. That Arlosoft Goodie bag stuffed full with records, books, games, Centurion model and the famous Hacker T-shirts will be going to **Anthony Griffin of Nottingham**. The runners-up are: **L Slater, London; Greg Staples, Sheffield; Stewart Ellis, Leeds; A Higgs, Berkis; Richard Rippan, Tyne & Wear; Simon Dean, Sheffield; Michael Piorot, London; Tim Pearson,**

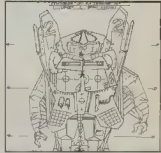
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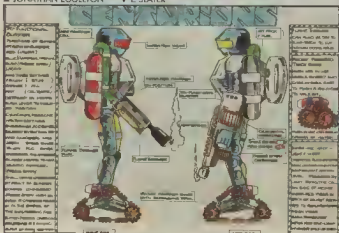
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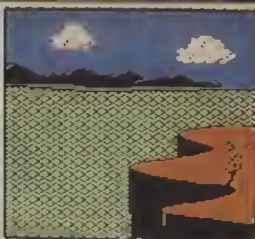
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C+VG

Keep a firm grip on this mag. Readers of other inferior rags will try and rip it out of your hands to read our exclusive on The Shadows of Mordor, follow up to Lord of the Rings



an overgrown hollow

Welcome once again to the mysterious and enchanted world of Middle Earth and *The Shadows of Mordor*, Melbourne House's follow up to *Lord of the Rings*.

The Shadows of Mordor, which follows the plot of JRR Tolkien's *The Two Towers* Book, promises more complex problems than the first game.

Lord of the Rings ended with the Frodo Baggins and Sam leaving Lathlorn, *Shadows* takes the story to the struggle at Shelob's lair.

The second game begins at the edge of Lake Mithlond, at the end of an successful journey down the river. Frodo and Sam have left their companions on an island in the middle of the lake, and have secretly gone on down to continue their quest.

Somewhere the intrepid adventurers must negotiate the desolate northlands and cross the evil mountains which surround their enemies' homeland.

The way is dangerous and unknown.

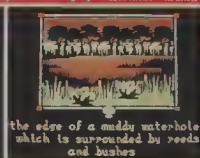
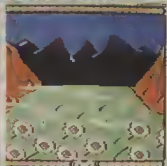
One of the previous improvements of *Shadows* over *Lord of the Rings* will be the use of VOELISH for language recognition. This means you should be able to say anything and the computer will recognise sentences up to 128 characters long. Each instruction must be in the form of "verb-there-see."

But the programmers — Australian House Software — say if the command words right in English it will probably be all right in ENGLISH.

When you start the game you have a choice of playing either Frodo or Sam. The computer will control the one you reject.

All the characters are rated for strength and stamina and can suffer in combat and from exhaustion.

The Shadows of Mordor will be released in June on the Commodore 64 for £9.95 cassette and £14.95 on disk, Amstrad at £9.95 and Spectrum — including a special 128K version — for £7.95.

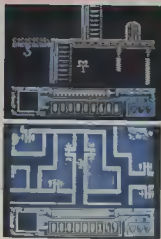
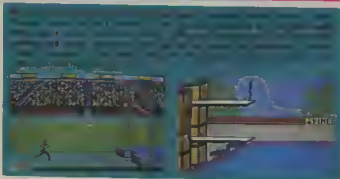


the mossy banks of a cool deer pool beside a waterfall

the edge of a muddly waterhole which is surrounded by reeds and bushes



This is *Barbarians* — the game inspired by Conan and Arnold. Jeez, you can be transformed from a five stone wanking into a mega hunk by Palace Software's newie. Over the next few weeks the shapely form of Page 3 girl Maria Whittaker and a muscle-man built like the side of a mountain will be appearing in the pages of the computer press to promote the game. Details of the game are still under wraps — just wait for the next month's C+VG to discover how *Barbarians* was born!



Prepare to enter *The Fifth Squadron*, the first offering from Bubbleway on the Spectrum (£7.95), Amstrad and Commodore 64 (£8.95 cassette/£12.95 disk). The Galactic Survey Vessel Orion is engaged on a mission to map and explore the galaxies of the Hercules Cluster. After 20 years the survey has almost complete apart from one small strange looking Nebula. The crew prepares to cross the intergalactic space by putting themselves into Sustained Low Energy Expenditure Process. During the crossing, Orion is taken over by a force of strange, alien, mechanical beings Zimen. When the crew re-emerges, they find that many of the ship's systems have been terminated, all the computers reprogrammed in an alien language and Zimen everywhere.

This arcade adventure is set on a spaceship which will have approximately 250 rooms/locations and the player controls of four robot crew swapping from one to another as necessary.

The robots glide about under the control of the player. There are lifts which transport robots between levels, and matter transmitters which will move them between fixed locations. Many of the ship's systems, including the lift and the matter transmitters, can be reprogrammed assuming the alien language can be cracked.

The Robots are

Stag — Ship's Captain and Pilot. He has a specialised compu-brain but is an older model. He is slowing up and doesn't like it.

Pit — Ship's navigator. Brilliant at any sort of calculation. Bit of a loner.

Knut — Ship's Engineer — Expert maintenance and repair man. Knows every zecometre of the ship, but has a screw loose!

Bodd — Crewman. Jack of all trades, master of none but a useful robot to have around. Looked down on by the rest of the crew, not very bright and a bit of a coward.

Remember *Thing on a Spring*, Grem-in's bouncy little game from a while back? Well *Thing* is all coiled up and ready to spring us to action again in *Thing Bounces Back*.

This shut is from the Commodore version of the game. *Thing* springs around the toy factory again which is packed with lasers, bounce pads, conveyor belts and teleporters.

Meanwhile also heading your way out of the Grem-in stable are the Amstrad and Spectrum versions of *Krakout*, a C+VG hit on the Commodore 64. It's basically *Breakout* with a whole lot more.

And for those of you lucky enough to have an Atari ST, here's a look at *Trailblazer*, (£24.95) action at the speed of light. Well almost.



STREET SEEN
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Mailbag.

Yeah! We're really cookin' now! At last they've let good ol' Grill back into the hot seat and give your letters the heat treatment. Me? Hot tempered? You better believe it! There's nothing better than a real flaming argument. And this issue we've got a few bubbling under. Let's kick off with the Tony Takoushi controversy

● I must confess I am not a regular reader of C+VG but I find it an excellent magazine when I occasionally buy it. The reviews are excellent as is the News section giving up to the minute information on new software which I find very useful.

However, your Hot Gossip section, with that '55%SE' Tony Takoushi, is totally NAFF. I never did like him and I think February's edition of this type went totally over the top.

I agree with his statement — 'my computer is better than yours' argument is pathetic — but he then proceeds to slam any computer which isn't a C64. How he could call the BBC 'Dead' is outrageous.

OK, so it doesn't have as wide a variety of games as the C64, but the BBC wasn't originally designed as a games computer.

The original conception of the BBC was for it to be used in education, and in this aspect it has succeeded fantastically. It is the most popular micro in use in English schools today, together with the Research machines. Where has the C64 succeeded other than as a games machine at which it is ideal? OK, so if you put a disk drive on it and a printer it can become something resembling a business machine, but which business has time to wait for the disk drive to operate? Fully expanded as a business machine the BBC is unbeatable and in the new Master line is FAR FROM DEAD!

Why don't you do us all a favour and get rid of this imbecile. I mean, just look at the letters you received last month where he criticised software houses of only producing clones of the same old games.

What a load of — I totally agree with the people who told him to open his eyes and take note of such games as *Paradise* and *Uridium*,

and which one of these three groupings would be put elite in? Could someone please tell him that this is 1987 and someone has actually invented the wheel! Stephen Wood Lancs

● One thing Tony isn't NAFF. He's been around in the games biz for a LONG time and knows what's what. OK, the fleeb may not be dead — but it's certainly not a red hot games machine. You must admit that. And this sound like one of those terribly boring 'my computer is better than yours' quibbles, I want red hot scandal on these pages not winnypish moans! TT stays put. He's the only one in the IDEAS penthouse with a bigger mouth than me! Now for some more TT bashing...

● I am very fond of your magazine and normally am quite happy reading it. However these are one of two points I currently feel rather strongly about and which prompted me to write in.

Firstly I am sick and tired of software firms putting out compilations willy-nilly. I am rather fortunate in being able to go out and buy most new programmes. I like the look of, but only just mind.

Many of your readers are young people however and will be saving up over many weeks for their games.

I guess they feel even more aggrieved than I do when the same game is released on an e-chicago compilation just a few short months later.

It's the people who buy the full price game who make the software houses as rich as they are, and they're content to reward us with a lunk in the clutch!

Obviously they have to make money. However, I think there ought to be a code of practise whereby software houses agree not to put games on a compilation for a

stated length of time after their release date, or to state quite categorically that they will never be included on compilations.

I wonder whether any would be bold enough to do this?

My other point is to do with Tony T. Your magazine has suffered immensely since allowing this back to write whatever he wants in his own column. He's just so big-headed I'm surprised the rest of you have room in the C+VG office.

I don't want to know how many arcade machines he owns, or how many BMW's he managed to buy out of his royalties from a couple of games. It's not something the rest of us can relate to and many people will feel patronised and jealous. Get this lad back onto making the tea.

If you're really looking for someone special to grace your pages with common sense, then get Keith Campbell to do it. This man should be considered for a Nobel Prize, he's so significant.

I for one, would much prefer to be told how to kill a dragon with a partridge and a Christmas pudding than how many Space Invaders machines someone got in his lavatory. C+VG is quite justifiably the best magazine in the shops. Here's to the next five years P.S. Readers will probably be pleased to learn that Takoushi's BMW is in fact 'P' registered and has terminal body rot. Duncan Roper Wexham

● Good point here. But some compilations — like the recent Ultimate packages and the Five Star Games compilations — are really good value for money. And not everyone can afford to buy a game a month, can they? Maybe we'll see the same thing happening in the games world as happened in the record biz with compilation albums outselling the singles. But let's hear some more views on the compilation issue. Back to the TT crisis — and I happen to know that he's got an I, Robot machine in the lav and Space Invaders. And you've obviously never listed his test even I of the cast iron constitution can't take it. C+VG

would be off the streets for years if we let TT near the teapot. I can relate to BMWs in a big way. If you had a few bob I suppose you'd get a Reliant Robin or something. If you've got it flaunt it, that's what I say! Terminal body rot. I had that once when I was a mere doddler. Not very nice I can tell you. As for a prize for Keith he already has his copy! Meanwhile here's someone with a good word for Mr T.

● May I say, well done Tony Takoushi? (Oh, all right. Ed) At last someone is willing to stand up for the MSX. Most of the British press have recently either stated MSX is ignored as MSX users — completely I am not including you as you've recently given MSX more coverage.

I just hope that Mr Takoushi doesn't come in for some criticism as most supporters of MSX do. May I also say, I agree totally with Mr Lucas (January C+VG) regarding MSX. It seems all the best games are being converted to the format, Dambusters, Super Cycle, Gauntlet, Spidee 40 etc etc. So obviously, there is a large market for MSX games as it wouldn't pay for them to convert otherwise.

I certainly have no intention of changing from MSX to any other format, and judging by the lack of MSX machines in your for sale pages not many MSX users are changing either.

Now, how about a full review of Nemesis, it's a game so good that you might buy an MSX machine just to play it.

I help run a MSX user group called MSX Link and if any of your readers would like details, send a SAf to David Webb, 11 Ayresough Ave Spalding, Lincs. We will gladly reply. Keith Neal (Lincs)

● At last someone actually recognising that C+VG does actually write about the MSX machines. Agree with you about MSX Nemesis — a hot game no doubt about it!

● Okay it's me, I'm back again and STILL moaning. The argument is

still this. A company cannot sell or advertise an item or product that it does not possess in kind. And to take money from individuals with the pretence of having that item is theft and to quote Mr. Kaliber "That is a crime", if a company cannot come up with the goods we are forced to wait on their terms. Can you imagine the stink a company would cause if a programmer failed to return a game without writing or phoning?

As I said before, if a company cannot reach a deadline mentioned in their adverts, they have an obligation to let people know. I waited four months without a word, from a certain company until my game was replaced.

Can you tell us what Ian Easter and Jon Law of CRL are up to now, as I am still hoping, in vain probably, for Cyborg to materialize. Are they continuing with the game? Have they kicked it in the head?

How about a new section entitled "whatever happened to" and go and ask what problems pangrammers encounter.

Right that's it. Once again I've moaned, but your answer to my last letter was very reassuring, however the comments about piracy and theft I think were a little naive. Don't pull that five year old stuff on me — I'm sn't

Andy Panell
Bristol

● Well good news, Andy. After months of waiting — it's almost a year since our Cyborg cover — the game has arrived. We'll review it in next month's issue.

● Before Christmas I had a Commodore 64 and nearly 100 games for it including classic games such as Ghosts 'n Goblins, Green Beret and Elite. Until the appearance of the Atari ST and Amiga, I was mildly satisfied with my 64K although as games quality never came near the coin ops. When I saw the reviews in the Super computers in my magazine, I gave up playing 64 games and put an ad in the paper to get rid of it, because I realised I had gone beyond the simplicity of eight bit computers.

When I had enough money I purchased an Atari ST, because of its enormous capabilities and the amazing price. Now that I have it I am even more impressed and I would like to inform people who are undecided in buying a computer that you cannot get your hands on a better computer.

I would also like to offer a small amount of advice to the publishers of C+VG. Due to the growing number of people seeking the ultimate in computer games — by buying an Atari ST — it would be advisable to review more software for this machine. I do not expect to see C&M, Spectrum and Amstrad owners being deprived but,

maybe you could add on more pages or drop one of the unpopular areas of your magazine ie Sticky Fingers, Extra Bits and War Games.

I do realise you have reviewed a small amount of games for the ST, but please make it a regular feature.

I am sure that other computer owners like reading super computer reviews — I am speaking from experience.
Anon,
Dublin

● What about all the tons of ST stuff we've been looking at recently, Sticky Fingers was a one off article and our War Games feature is enjoyed by many readers. Extra Bits is a crucial add on to C+VG. Unpopular? Rubbish! Apart from that the ST will be a regular feature in this mag from now on. We've even persuaded Kaliber to cough up and get one for the penthouse.

● I read the interview with Gerry Anderson, I was transported back to my childhood (I confess to being one of your mature readers!!) I would like to point out that the photo you labelled Lady Penelope and Jeff Tracy is in fact Venus and Steve Zodiac, from Fairball XL5, a series which kept me glued to the screen (albeit a black and white one). I forgive you this as I doubt whether you were old enough to see the original series. This is a compliment, Tim.
Roz Bridgeman
Stroud

● Yeah, the person who misbed up the captions is now in solitary confinement on Tracy Island! How anyone could get them wrong is beyond me. But did you know that The Ed claims to have actually met Steve Zodiac? It he OK in the head or what? But no, Tim insists that Steve came round for tea one day and it's one of his claims to fame. I think his brain has finally frazzled.

● I own an Atari 800XL computer. No, stop laughing. It's not that funny. What? You weren't laughing. Well that's a surprise. It seems to me that whenever I mention to somebody that I own an Atari Computer I have to endure five minutes of hysterical laughter and then a further twenty-five minutes of them telling me how great the Commodore 64 is compared to the Atari.

The fact that they probably have never seen the Atari in action is neither here nor there. I'd just like to take this opportunity to say that I COULD NOT CARE LESS! I am not interested in how good the graphics are, or how great the sound is. I already know these things and I do not wish to hear them everyone I try to discuss my computer with somebody else.

Still that's not why I am writing to you now. The reason that I am writing to you seems to be the same reason that every other Atari

User writes to you, can you guess what it is? That's right, not enough Atari game reviews.

I know what your excuse is, "the software houses just don't send us the software". PAH! Have you even thought that the reason they don't send you software is that they think that you are not interested?

Perhaps you could send Big Red around to "explain" how you feel (now before I go any further I feel I must explain that I do not believe in the Bug Hunters, they are just the by-products of a warped imagination).

Why don't you discuss your problem with Alan User? They seem to have no problem getting software and have reviewed some very good games as well as the budget titles that you seem to favour.

Another thing I have noticed about your magazine is that in your Mailbag section, which I think is very good but is far too short!! I know, lack of space, whenever somebody writes, "I know you won't print this letter" it always seems to get printed, so I think I'll give it a try.

I know you won't print this letter as some might think that it is highly critical. However, I feel that it is important that I should be able to air my views in such a way.

Oh just one more thing. I hope that you will ignore my spelling mistakes, because I try my best to ignore yours and the pictures being put in up side down (you even managed to put a picture of an Alien in one issue up-side down, apologize for your mistake in another issue, and then re-print the same picture in another issue up-side down again).

I also ignore the pictures being in the wrong place (Big Red upsetting the table with all the pictures on, HA!), and your occasional Atari listings which seem to have chunks missing and are full of errors which nobody seems to have spotted. I thought spotting errors was what the Bug-Hunters were supposed to do. Oh, I forgot, they are not real are they? Yes, I ignore these things and do not mention them because they are of little importance to me, but it the attitude of the "Numbers One Computer Mag" and various software houses doesn't improve I shall inform you of my supermi.

Mrs M. Ravenclaw, who does most, of these errors.

Thank you for allowing me some of your precious space which could have easily had an advert for a game which will come out next year if we're lucky on it.
Sean Roblett Bedfordshire

● Don't believe in the Bug Hunters? You'll be telling me that you don't believe in Santa next! And it's Ms Ravenclaw, you don't mind! How would YOU feel if I said I didn't believe in the Atari? Which we do. The Atari is a much loved machine in the C+VG office. And yes we would like to see more Atari software, so software houses please take note. And I guess you've spotted the Greyfriar Shockway Rider picture miss up in March issue. Thank you VERY much Mr Printer! Another fine mess you've got us into!

● I recently read in Papuan Community Weekly that many major software companies were having problems finding enough new top class assembly language programmers. Well I have a solution, why don't these software houses employ a group of people who they can teach, train etc to become top programmers?


Obviously some "entrance exam" would be necessary to test the candidates abilities. Then this elite (forgive the pun) crew could be taught to program by the top programmers in each software house. For example Chris Butler, Tony Crowther — the king of scrolling shoot-em ups — and so on. Come on software houses, if you can't find the talent create it! You can own — give us more mortals a shot at the pot of gold.

Oh, by the way, any companies reading this letter and decide to take up my idea then include me in your list of possible number one programmers as I can program in assembly for Z80, 6502, and 68000 and I believe I have the hidden talent imagination. Please etc that just need bringing out by you. So give us a chance eh?


Mark Hida
Bristol

● You're full of good ideas is this month aren't you? Here's another from Mark. Well, if there's a software house or programmer reading this who likes the idea we're waiting for your reply.





THE *Big* SLEAZE



THE BIG SLEAZE

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NEXT MONTH

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● **FREE ARCADE ADDICTS HANDBOOK** — 24 full colour pages of hot news, hints and maps, reviews AND a chance to enter the great C+VG Arcade Championship Challenge. Have you got what it takes to be our Arcade Champ?

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● Watch out for it in your newsagents on May 15th. Get it before it's gone!

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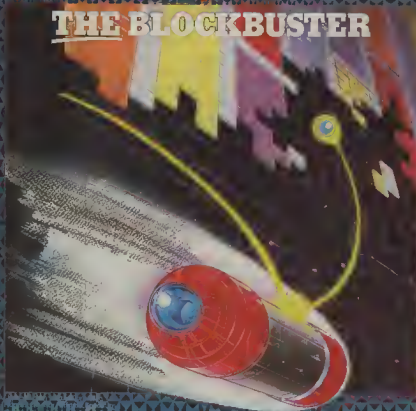
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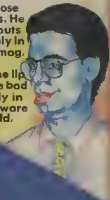
**the name
of the game**

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the most addictive
action with the most
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ace Tony Takoushi has the biggest eyes, nose and mighty mouth in computer games. He sees all, hears all and he then shouts about it each month exclusively in your favourite computer mag.

So read on for the man who shoots from the lip at the good, the bad and the ugly in the software world.



This month's offerings are two very tasty pieces of Atari ST software, the official *Crystal Castles* and *Xtron* a one megabyte shoot-'em-up in the classic mode.

Crystal Castles is a very professional and definitive version of the arcade original. You take on the role of Bentley Bear and have to wander around various castles collecting gems, honey and hats while avoiding, amongst other things, the dreaded trees

(oh, no not the TREES!), bee hives, and a little spell thrower.

You can play with joystick or mouse and there is an option for one or two players.

The other really nice part of such a well presented game is its playability, it plays fast.

The game has a really zippy tune which makes you want to bounce up and down in your chair.

The graphics are crisp, clear and very colourful and use a yummy colour scheme of red,

green, blue and yellow.

This must rate as one of the best conversions of an arcade game to a home micro. Atari should be making announcements in the near future as to the availability of this and its other arcade conversion on the ST. *Xtron* is the other game this month and it is the first game to use the one megabyte 1040 St machine. It is basically a left-right shoot-'em-up but with real class

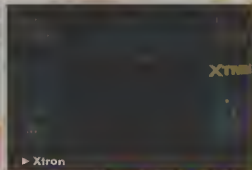
You have 12 lives and countless levels to work through, the presentation is really ace with beautifully defined aliens and haunting sound effects.

The aliens whirl and twirl around you and this is not for the faint hearted!

The two programmers Singh and Wagner recently completed their latest game *Typhoon* which takes the concept of this game a stage further. Do not miss it!



► *Crystal Castles*



► *Xtron*

I was recently strolling around the Virgin Games Centre in central London listening to young and old alike deciding on what games they wanted to buy.

It really did shock me to hear the vast majority of people look at and then walk away from the full price software. They complained about the price, or said they didn't have enough money to buy the game.

One of the most painful aspects of being a reviewer is getting free software. Having been on the receiving end of

thousands of freebie games I have lost touch with the reality of software prices.

It has to be said that the market has and is continuing to develop its pricing structure. I was a fervent anti-budget man (until recently when I sold my own game to Mastertronic), thinking budget was degrading and below my dignity.

Budget is here to stay and it performs an essential task, it bridges that huge gap in price from two pounds to ten pounds. Make no mistake budget is an integral part of the market and the general quality

is good going on an excellent

The market is currently straddled with three pricing points — £1.99, £2.99, £8.99 full price and ten pounds for compilations.

There are two new price points soon to be attempted, £4.99 and the £1 game. These are really tearing away the foundations which divide budget and full price games. £1 undermines the £2.3 area and £4.99 undermines the £8.99 price tag.

I cannot see these two price points working, the profit margin for shops will become

blurred and just where do you draw the quality line for a £12.3 game or a £5.8,10 game.

Basically it is playing silly buggers with the market. Can we please have some sanity and sensible pricing in the market software houses?

As far as you joystick wogglers out there, what do you buy with your pennies?

Drop me a line telling me what you think are the best buys or whether you think games are too expensive.

Tony Takoushi

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